

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Donabate Community College

In Donabate Community College punctual attendance at school and class is considered central to learning. Parents/Guardians must encourage their students to take responsibility for their own learning and achieve their full potential.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 places a statutory responsibility on schools and parents to provide for the optimum attendance of every student. Education Welfare Boards have been established to oversee school attendance nationwide and each school has been assigned an Education Welfare Officer whose duty it is to liaise with the school in relation to any attendance problems which may emerge.

The Principal must inform the Education Welfare Officer where any of the following occur:

- A student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- A Principal is concerned about a student's attendance
- The Board of Management decides to expel a student
- A student has been suspended for 6 days or more cumulatively
- A student's name is to be removed from the school register for whatever reason

Procedures for Managing Attendance

The attendance system used in Donabate Community College is the 'Anseo' Attendance System.

- Each new student is issued with an I.D. card which is used to record their attendance in school each morning. Students arriving late and leaving early are monitored by the school office.

- Students who arrive late must present their I.D. card to 'swipe in' at the school office, print their name in the late book or have it entered on-line and have their journals stamped.
- Students leaving early must have their "to leave at" letter signed by their Year Head. Students can then show the signed "to leave at" letter at the school office and then present their I.D. card to 'swipe out' at the school office. Students must also print their name in the early departures book.
- Students who forget or lose their card must report to the school office or Year Head so that they can be manually keyed in. Students are required to replace lost cards at their own expense. These cards can be ordered at reception at a cost of €10.
- Should a student be unwell and unable to attend school it is asked that Parents/Guardians contact the school office to inform the school secretary or Year Head of their student's absence.
- Class teachers take the roll in their class using VsWare attendance system.
- Should a student be in class and marked absent on the VsWare System for failing to 'swipe in' with their I.D. card, the teacher can mark them present.
- Should a student be marked present and is not in class, and no note has been placed on VsWare explaining the absence from class, the teacher will immediately notify Year Head, or Deputy Principal / Principal. This can be done by email. If the student cannot be located a phone call is made to their Parent/Guardian to inform them that their son / daughter is not on the premises.
- Spot checks are carried out on different occasions to check the validity of the system.

Consequences for unauthorised Non Attendance

The sanction for a student who is absent without permission from school is suspension. The duration is commensurate with the time absent without permission and may result in a report being sent to the local Education Welfare Officer.

Procedures for Monitoring Punctuality

Punctuality is a valuable aspect of class management. It is essential that students attend class punctually to ensure an orderly learning environment.

- All students are expected to be punctual for each class, each day.
- The school bell rings at 8.25am indicating that students should leave their base classroom and proceed to first class.
- The school bell rings at 8.30am to signal the commencement of class. The front doors are locked on the sounding of this bell.
- Students should arrive by 8.20am to ensure they have sufficient time to go to their base classroom to access their locker before the commencement of first class at 8.30am.
- Students who arrive after 8.30 a.m. must go to the school office swipe in, sign in and have her school journal stamped. They will then present to their timetabled class.
- Parents/Guardians of students whose punctuality to school is problematic receive a letter from the Principal requesting them to support the school in matters of punctuality
- Students who report late to class at other times will be sanctioned by the class teacher

Procedures for sanctioning late arrivals to school

- TWO unexplained Lates in a WEEK will result in:
 - Phonecall to Parents, Letter home, Official Detention
- TWO unexplained Lates in a Calendar MONTH will result in:
 - Letter home, Official Detention

In addition to these violations should a student have:

- An additional TWO unexplained Lates within the same Calendar month (bringing total unexplained Lates to 4) the result will be:
 - Letter home notifying student/Parent/Guardian of Official Detention
 - Telephone-call to Parents /Guardian to arrange a meeting with the school
 - Students / Parents / Guardians will receive written warning that one more additional late that Calendar month will result in an immediate ONE day

suspension (with additional days requested to the BOM for repeat offenders).

Note: Excessive Lates may result in serious sanctions being applied up to and including suspension.

Procedures for Students who Feel Unwell During School Time

- A student who feels unwell during class must report to the school office, having first sought permission from her class teacher, or if illness occurs during lunch break their Year Head. If the student is unable to return to class the Secretary will telephone their Parents/Guardians and make arrangements to have the student collected. Students who feel unwell may only leave the school in the company of her Parent/Guardian or a nominee of their Parent/Guardian.
- Parents must provide the school with emergency contact numbers and ensure that there is always someone available for the school to contact, should it be necessary.
- Should the student need to leave the school, they must present their I.D. card to 'swipe out' at the School Office and print their name in the early departures book.
- On the student's return to school, Parents/Guardians must give an explanation note to the Year Head or present a medical cert to the school office.

Note: In the case of a medical emergency, if the parents cannot be reached, the school will call an ambulance.

LUNCH-TIME ARRANGEMENTS

All students are required to remain in school at lunchtime and take their lunch in the area designated for them by the school. Failure to follow these requirements may result in a sanction in line with the school's code of Positive behaviour.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students:

- To 'swipe in' each morning and punctually attend all classes.
- To be responsible for ensuring all notes and letters excusing absences / lates or to leave at are written into their school journal and presented to the Principal/ Deputy Principal/ Year Head/ Tutor/ Class Teacher or Office on request.
- To have 'to leave at' letters authorised by their Year Head.

Parents/Guardians:

- Will share responsibility and support the school procedures on Attendance and Punctuality
- Will ensure that their students attend school punctually each day.
- Will notify the school of reasons for absence when a student is absent for part of a school day, a school day or more than a school day. This should be done by recording a written explanation in the student's journal.
- Will provide a written explanation for their student's absence/late arrival/to leave at in the appropriate place of the student's journal.
- Should arrange medical, dental and other appointments outside of school time, where possible.

Year Head:

- To be responsible for monitoring students' attendance and notes and for communicating with the student and his/her Parents/Guardians when issues arise.

Class teacher:

- To take class attendance using VsWare.
- To monitor the attendance at every class through the VsWare system and communicate any discrepancies to the office.

School Office:

- To assist students with 'swiping in' when late to school, to place a late stamp in students journal and maintain a "Lates" book either written or electronic.
- To accept authorised 'to leave at' letters from students and assist students with 'swiping out'. They will also maintain an early departures book.
- To assist students who are ill in ringing home.
- To maintain the Anseo and VsWare systems of attendance as required.
- To provide data as required by N.E.W.B.
- To provide data on attendance/punctuality to Parents/Guardians when required by the school authorities.

Lates Officer

- Will assist in the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Procedures.
- May be asked to place a late stamp in students journals and maintain the "Lates" book either written or electronic.
- May from time to time notify Parents / Guardians of students who will be placed on Official Detention and or Suspension.
- When requested will provide data on Lates to Principal / Deputy Principal and Year Heads.
- When requested by the Principal / Deputy Principal will investigate students with excessive or repeated lates.

Principal/Deputy Principal:

- To be responsible for the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Procedures.
- To place a late stamp in students journals and maintain the "Lates" book either written or electronic.
- To notify Parents / Guardians of students who will be placed on Official Detention and or Suspension.
- To notify the Board of Management of students who have in excess of four unexplained lates in a Calendar month or students who are presenting late to school on a frequent basis.
- To notify the Education Welfare Office in circumstances as outlined above.
- To review the attendance and punctuality procedures on a regular basis.

In implementing the procedures as outlined above the Board of Management endeavor to ensure that all students partake in and benefit from the education provided by regular and punctual attendance at school and class.

- Parents/Guardians are reminded that unauthorised absence from the school premises or from classes by students is a serious breach of Health & Safety Guidelines, Child Protection Guidelines and the School's Code of Positive Behaviour.
- The school authorities cannot accept responsibility for students who absent themselves from school or from a class for any purpose without prior permission.
- Parents are responsible for students when they sign out during the school day.
- The Principal / Deputy Principal reserve the right to exercise discretion in the implementation of the sanctions in exceptional circumstances.

Ratified and adopted by the Board of Management on 12/9/2017

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Board of Management