



Glanmire Community College

Glanmire Community College Attendance Policy

WHY PROMOTE GOOD ATTENDANCE?

Introduction

Glanmire Community College is committed to addressing the needs of the College in relation to school attendance.

The policy applies to teachers and all other College staff, parents, students and the Board of Management.

Rationale

At GCC we want our students to get the best opportunity in life; a quality education is one of these opportunities.

Good school attendance is a key element of successful participation, experiences and outcomes at school.

Part of the GCC whole school policy and ethos is to encourage and develop a culture of attendance and positive engagement with school among all college students.

Relationship to the School Ethos

In line with the ethos of our college each child's personal development is a priority. The building of each child's self esteem is of prime importance.

The school has a duty to provide a safe and caring environment in which the students can function and receive the education they deserve. The College endeavours to allow each student to have a positive experience of school.

Aims

- To implement a plan of action that enables school management to identify, at an early stage, students whose attendance is problematic.
- To devise strategies to support students whose attendance may be less than satisfactory.
- To inform parents of their primary role as educators in relation to encouraging students to attend school and to support parents in this role.
- To facilitate the development of new approaches and practices that improve school attendance.

Objectives

- To maintain accurate records of attendance.
- To develop positive self-esteem in our students.
- To give students a positive experience of school life.
- To identify evolving trends and practices at school level and in society that contribute in general to a culture of poor attendance.
- To ensure that any measures put in place are effectively implemented.

THE EDUCATION WELFARE ACT (2000)

The Education Welfare Act 2000 provides a comprehensive framework for promoting regular school attendance and tackling the problems of absenteeism and early school leaving. This Act was signed into law on the 5th July 2000.

The legal situation is as follows:

The minimum school age is 16 years or the completion of three years of post-primary education, whichever is the latter.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS IN RELATION TO ATTENDANCE

- Must ensure that their child/children attend school regularly.
- Must send their child/children to school until they are 16 years of age or the completion of three years of post-primary education, whichever is the latter.
- Must inform the school of their son/daughter's absence and the reason why.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL IN RELATION TO ATTENDANCE

- Must keep a school register, attendance records and code of behaviour.
- Must put a school attendance strategy in place.
- Must inform the Education Welfare Officer when:
 - Students are not attending school regularly.
 - Students have missed more than 20 days.
 - Students have been suspended for more than 6 days.
 - A Student's name is removed from the school register.
- Where school absences are found to be linked to emotional, social, learning or other such difficulties, GCC will endeavour to put measures in place to deal with those difficulties.

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- GCC management and staff will take note of those days when there is poor attendance and actively encourage students to attend on those days. (Days before holidays, parent/teacher/student meeting days *etc.*). This encouragement may take any forms including writing to parents.
- The management and staff will actively promote the attendance of exam students for the full school year and discourage the practice of student absences for 'study' purposes.
- Attendance Records may form part of a student's character reference.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/ABSENTEEISM

Students:

- Must be in their base classrooms for registration each morning for 9.00 a.m.
- Must have a signed note in their journal explaining their absence from school, this should be presented to their Class Teacher at registration.
- Students leaving school early must have (i) a signed note in their journal in advance from a Parent/Guardian, (ii) their journal signed by their Class Teacher/Year Head.
- Students must report to the office with their journal to be signed out when leaving, and signed in upon returning.
- Students must be in time for class.
- Students who leave the school informally will be dealt with under the discipline procedures of the school and parents/guardians will be informed about this very serious transgression.

Students who are constantly late or are poor timekeepers will be put on detention as outlined in our discipline procedures.

Teachers:

- Must fill in the attendance records each day.
- Must check daily record at registration each morning and afternoon, and check student's journals for notes to cover absenteeism.
- Must promote good attendance and the reasons for it during weekly tutorials.
- All teachers should monitor attendance at their classes and report any patterns of non-attendance to the school attendance officer.

ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

WHAT ARE WE DOING AT GLANMIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

- We have put an Attendance Officer in place.
- We reward good attendance:
 - Certificates and rewards for students with full attendance.
 - Letters home to parents.
 - Attendance records given to Principal, Year Heads and Class Teachers.
- In the event of poor attendance we send:
 - Letters home at 20 days absent.
 - Letters to the Education Welfare Officer once 20 days are missed, also when more than five days are missed through suspension (copy of letter sent to parents).
 - Copy of letters sent are placed in the student's file.
- Other initiatives we use to promote good attendance:
 - Homework Club after school for first and second year students.
 - Supervised study for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate students after school and evening study.
 - Sports and other extra curricular activities.
 - Affirmation initiatives.
 - A tutorial for each class group once a week.
 - Introduction of the Leaving Certificate Applied August 2005.
 - The Meitheal Programme
 - The work of the Pastoral Care Team.

Review

This policy statement is to be reviewed periodically in consultation with all the partners.

Evaluation

Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Students and Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for a minimum of one year and any changes will then be incorporated into the amended policy.