

Coláiste Bríde Clondalkin

Attendance Strategy

Roll Number: 60122D

Scope:

This strategy was drawn up in consultation with all the school partners, including the Board of Management, staff, parents and students and relates to all aspects of attendance and punctuality.

The school's vision and values in relation to attendance:

Coláiste Bríde Presentation School is an all girls secondary school, based on the vision of Nano Nagle of providing a holistic Christian education based on Gospel values.

At Coláiste Bríde, we are committed to encouraging our students to develop a pattern of regular and punctual attendance in order to benefit fully from the education provided in our school. Without such a pattern of regular attendance and punctuality, it is not possible to “develop the personal, academic and spiritual potential of each student in a caring and disciplined environment.” (*Ref: School Mission Statement*)

Rationale:

- ❖ To work to protect, in conjunction with all other aspects of school life, the care and welfare of our students
- ❖ To facilitate continuity and progression in the learning process
- ❖ To ensure that students benefit fully from opportunities that this school offers them.
- ❖ To ensure all parents/guardians, students and teachers are aware of their responsibilities to ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality
- ❖ To ensure the school fulfils its legal obligations in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and other relevant acts.

Under the Act, 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 Educational Welfare Officer where any of the following occur:

1. A student is suspended from school for a period of not less than six days
2. The aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is not less than twenty
3. A student is, in the opinion of the Principal of the school in which he/she is registered, not attending school regularly

Goals:

- ❖ To develop a positive approach to attendance and punctuality
- ❖ To encourage students to take responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality
- ❖ To maintain accurate records of students' whereabouts throughout the school day
- ❖ To achieve early detection and correction of poor attendance patterns
- ❖ To impress upon parents, the vital role they play in their daughter's school attendance
- ❖ To employ measures to reduce the rate of absenteeism and encourage good attendance and punctuality

A positive approach to attendance and punctuality:

Good attendance is promoted in the school by a culture of high expectations where every student is encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning in order to reach their full potential.

Students are regularly made aware of the importance of being present, to allow continuity of learning, and the implications for them of irregular attendance is highlighted throughout the curriculum

The Year Head, members of the Pastoral Care Team and the Attendance Officer meet with students for whom attendance and punctuality has become an issue

Records of attendance are available to parents to view on VsWare by logging in using their unique password

The school's reward system acknowledges excellent attendance and punctuality

Through participation in school life and extracurricular activities, a sense of belonging in school is developed

Monitoring attendance:

- ❖ All students attend Tutor time at 8:40 each morning. The roll is recorded electronically on VsWare, and manually by the class captain in the attendance notebook provided to the tutors by the Attendance Officer in the school
- ❖ Absence notes are submitted to the class tutor at Tutor time and the roll is amended accordingly on VsWare by the tutor i.e. Illness, family etc.
- ❖ Absence notes are kept in a folder by the tutor and are collected on a regular basis by the Attendance and Punctuality Prefects. They are then filed away by the Attendance Officer
- ❖ Students who arrive after 8:40, are late for school and must sign in with the attendance Officer in the General Purpose Area or at Reception. The student will be given a Late Stamp in her journal. Students are required to present a note of explanation for their lateness from their parents in their journal. If such a note is provided, the school administrator amends the roll to explained late. If a note is not provided, the roll is amended to Late.
- ❖ Students who leave school early during the day due to illness or appointments must have a note in their journal from their parents/guardian/tutor. The student must be collected by their parent/guardian and she must sign out and be given a Home Early stamp in her journal
- ❖ If that student returns to school later in the day, she must sign back in at the school reception
- ❖ Where students are absent from school due to school related activities, this is recorded on VsWare as School Activity. The teacher organising the activity emails a list of students engaging in the activity to the school administrator, who in turn amends the roll to school activity. If a student listed is absent from the activity/trip, then the teacher will notify the administrator
- ❖ Attendance is recorded by all teachers on VsWare at the beginning of each class period
- ❖ School refusal students will be supported through our Pastoral Care Support Team, Year Head support, School Completion Programme Support and the Education Welfare Officer.

Whole school approach to attendance and punctuality:

- ❖ The importance of attendance and punctuality is stressed to students by the Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads and Attendance Officer at assemblies
- ❖ Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own attendance by signing the Pledge of Attendance and filling in the Attendance Tracker in their school journal. This is monitored by the tutor
- ❖ There is an extended tutor time dedicated to rolling out a lesson which explicitly teaches our students what good attendance and punctuality looks like. This lesson is prepared by the Attendance Officer in the school and emailed to all tutors
- ❖ Parents are made aware of their roll in relation to their daughter's attendance and punctuality in letters sent home to parents, at parents' information evenings and in the school journal
- ❖ At four different stages in the school year, letters are sent to parents/guardians of those students whose attendance is erratic, informing them of the number of days missed by their daughter

- ❖ Students are rewarded for good attendance and punctuality: there are reward cards in the back of the student journal which teachers stamp. Attendance and Punctuality prefects also help to stamp journals with reward stamps for attendance and punctuality twice per week. When a student fills out a full card, she submits it to her Year Head who, in turn sends a Well Done Card home
- ❖ Students who achieve One hundred percent attendance and 98% attendance are rewarded with Certificates at the School Awards Ceremony
- ❖ Twice yearly, money vouchers are raffled among those students who have more than 98% attendance. There is a separate raffle for junior and senior students
- ❖ In order to encourage good attendance among First Year students, Attendance Charts are displayed in the tutor rooms and filled in by tutors on a weekly basis.
- ❖ During Wellbeing Week an activity is organised for those students who have achieved full attendance

School Roles in relation to attendance:

Principal:

- ❖ To ensure adequate systems are in place to record attendance and absence of students
- ❖ To monitor attendance records regularly
- ❖ To oversee the submission of reports to the Educational Welfare Officer as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000
- ❖ To inform parents/guardians of procedures for the notification of absences and withdrawal of students from the school
- ❖ To remind students of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and the negative impact of irregular school attendance on student progress

Deputy Principals:

- ❖ To work in cooperation with the Principal, Attendance Officer, Year Heads, Pastoral Care Team, Class Tutors, Class Teachers and Administration Staff to implement the school policy
- ❖ To liaise with the Pastoral Care Team, Year Head and Attendance Officer in order to address difficulties regarding student attendance
- ❖ To meet, along with the Year Head, students who have unauthorised absence from school and also to meet their parents/guardians
- ❖ To encourage teachers to record attendance for each lesson
- ❖ To follow up students who fail to turn up for detention for lateness

Year Head:

- ❖ To monitor regularly, attendance records on VsWare for their particular year group
- ❖ To liaise with the Attendance Officer, Pastoral Care Team and Deputy Principals to address difficulties regarding particular students' attendance
- ❖ To remind students at assemblies of the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality
- ❖ To meet those students for whom attendance is a problem
- ❖ To contact parents and/or arrange meetings where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and when undesirable patterns of attendance are developing
- ❖ To help with the filling out of special referrals to Tusla

Attendance Officer:

- ❖ To monitor punctuality on a daily basis, overseeing the signing in of students who are late for school and putting a Late stamp in their journal
- ❖ To record lates in an Excel File
- ❖ To speak to students who are constantly late for school
- ❖ To issue detention sheets to students who have accumulated 3 unexplained lates
- ❖ To oversee Detention of these students and requiring that the students write a reflection piece during the detention session
- ❖ To monitor the recording of attendance on VsWare by the tutors

- ❖ To liaise and assist class tutors in matters relating to the recording of attendance on VsWare
- ❖ To liaise with Class Tutors, Year Heads, Deputy Principals, Pastoral Care Team and Home Schools Liaison Person, in relation to students for whom attendance is a problem
- ❖ To speak at Assemblies to encourage students to be present and be punctual
- ❖ To submit the required reports to Tusla during the school year and complete and submit the End of Year report to Tusla
- ❖ To submit an End of Year Report to the Board of Management with regard to Attendance and Punctuality
- ❖ To work in conjunction with the Administrator in the school office in preparing and sending out letters to parents of students for whom attendance is a problem, four times during the school year
- ❖ To inform all teaching staff of their legal obligation in regard to recording attendance accurately
- ❖ To assist with the special referral to Tusla, of students for whom attendance is a major problem
- ❖ To make a presentation to staff at the beginning of the school year regarding attendance and punctuality, presenting facts and figures and strategies for improvement
- ❖ To collect absence notes from tutors and file them
- ❖ To oversee and develop a system of rewards to encourage good attendance
- ❖ To organise Attendance and punctuality Prefects to stamp reward cards in the journals of those students who come on time for school
- ❖ To manage the recording of attendance during House Exams with the help of Transition Year students

Class Tutor:

- ❖ To record attendance for each student on VsWare every morning at 8:40
- ❖ To check absence notes from parents/guardians and store them in a folder which is collected by the Attendance Officer
- ❖ To amend the role to an Explained absence when absence notes are presented by the student
- ❖ To inform the Attendance Officer, Home School Liaison Person and Year Head when patterns of poor attendance are emerging
- ❖ To elect a Class Captain who will keep a manual record of absences in a notebook provided by the Attendance Officer

Class Teacher:

- ❖ To record attendance for every class period every day
- ❖ To provide a list of students partaking in a school related activity, to the Administration staff so that the roll can be amended to School Activity
- ❖ To record attendance on VsWare during periods of S&S
- ❖ To impress upon students, the need for regular attendance and insist on punctuality

Student:

- ❖ To attend punctually all timetabled classes every day unless there is a valid reason not to do so
- ❖ To present a written absence note from parents/guardians in their journal on their return to school after a period of absence
- ❖ To sign the Pledge of Attendance in their journal
- ❖ To monitor and take responsibility for their own attendance by filling out the Attendance Tracker in their journal
- ❖ To provide a written note from parents/guardians in their journal on arrival late for school

Parent/Guardian:

- ❖ To support the school's attendance strategy in compliance with the Education Welfare Act 2000
- ❖ To ensure that their daughter attends school regularly
- ❖ To provide a written explanation of absence in the school journal on the first day of return to school after a period of absence
- ❖ To provide the school with reliable contact telephone numbers so that the school may contact parents/guardians during the school day
- ❖ To reply, where necessary to communications from the school relating to attendance and punctuality
- ❖ To arrange for all elective appointments for after school or during school holidays
- ❖ To produce a written explanation in the student journal when a student arrives late to school
- ❖ To abide by the procedures in the school for withdrawing students from school during the school day
- ❖ To sign the Pledge of Attendance in the student journal
- ❖ To monitor their daughter's attendance on VsWare

Administrative Staff:

- ❖ To enter data concerning punctuality on VsWare on a weekly basis
- ❖ To input data on VsWare from class teachers regarding school activity where required
- ❖ To input any other data relating to attendance, provided by class teachers
- ❖ To help with the signing in and out of students and provide Home Early stamps in the student journal
- ❖ To work in conjunction with the Attendance Officer, to prepare and send out letters to parents regarding attendance 4 times during the school year

Attendance and Punctuality Prefects:

- ❖ To stamp Reward Cards in the Journals of those students who are punctual
- ❖ To help collect Absence Notes from Tutors
- ❖ To model good attendance and punctuality
- ❖ To speak to entire student groups at Assembly, pointing out the importance of attending school regularly and on time
- ❖ To help organise folders used for recording attendance during house exams

Partnership arrangements:

- ❖ The school engages with the School Completion Program
- ❖ The school will engage with relevant bodies and engage with services where there is a concern regarding attendance

Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Review process and date for review:

The Statement of Strategy will be reviewed in (Date): _____