



## PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL, BALLYPHEHANE

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**Principal:** Ms Nicola Barrett

**Deputy Principal:** Ms. Gillian Murphy

### Attendance Policy

(Reviewed March 2018)

Presentation Secondary School is Committed to Striving for Excellence in a Christian Environment

Our attendance policy at Presentation Secondary School is based on the principles of our mission statement and aims.

#### Basic Principles

- As a school community we believe in the importance of full attendance and good punctuality for each student as they are a keystone of our educational practice.
- This policy is a school-wide policy, for implementation by all staff, parents/legal guardians, students, students who have reached the age of majority and Board of Management.
- This policy sets out the basic principles upon which the School Attendance Strategy will be implemented, sustained and evaluated in our school.
- This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, the Board of Management, parents, and students.

#### Rationale

- In Presentation Secondary School we are educators first. We believe that regular and consistent attendance fosters an appreciation for learning which is key to a child's development for a successful later life.
- We recognise that parents/legal guardians are the primary educators and as such are primarily responsible for ensuring that their children receive the education to which they have a right and deserve. The school is here to provide and enhance this education. **Attendance at school and full participation in school life is therefore essential.**
- Presentation Secondary School, in partnership with parents/legal guardians aims to create an environment conducive to learning for all students.
- The school and parents/legal guardians have certain obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and TUSLA regarding attendance and participation.

#### Policy Goals

- Assist towards creating a school environment where all students feel welcome in the school, and where their educational needs and concerns are met within the resources provided to the school.
- Implement the monitoring and recording aspects of the School's Attendance Strategy.
- Highlight and encourage the importance of good attendance and participation in school life.
- Encourage good communication between parents/guardians and the school.
- Follow established procedures for the monitoring of attendance and non-attendance.
- Follow established procedures for attendance record-keeping for the school, students, parents and TUSLA.
- Develop working partnerships between the school and relevant Agencies and services, such as the TUSLA.

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- Support students and parents/guardians where there are attendance problems.
- Identify the cohort of students at risk.

### **Statutory Requirements**

- Presentation Secondary School expects all students registered in the school to attend all time-tabled classes every day.
- If a student is absent, then the school will require an explanation in writing from the parent/legal guardian.
- If a student is under 16 or she has not completed three years at post-primary school, it is the legal responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to ensure she attends school every day.  
If this student is absent for a total of 20 days or more the school is obliged in law to report this to the TUSLA. This report must be made irrespective of the reasons for the absence.
- If the school is very concerned about the pattern of a student's absence this will be referred to the HSCL/Principal/TUSLA as the school is obliged to refer said concerns to the relevant education welfare services.
- Presentation Secondary School will always inform the parent/legal guardian if a report is being made to NEWB/TUSLA.

### **Code of Behaviour**

#### **Attendance**

- All absences should be explained in writing by parents / legal guardian on the day the student returns to the school. (Please use the appropriate section of the school journal) This note is to be handed to the Deputy Principal before 8.40 or placed in her post box.
- If a student is absent for more than one school day, parents / legal guardians should contact the school secretary by telephone.
- The Deputy Principal may contact parents/legal guardians at their discretion, if absence is less than 3 days.
- If a student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days, the Deputy Principal will make contact with the parents/legal guardians of that student.
- Persistent absences will result in the parents/ legal guardians being asked to come to the school to meet with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, to work collaboratively to secure better educational outcomes for the child.

#### **Leaving school during the school day**

**If an appointment (with a doctor, dentist etc.), is to be arranged, it should where possible, be arranged after school time. If this is not possible, the following procedures apply:**

- For appointments during school time, a note of explanation is required from parents/legal guardians.
- This note must be shown to the Deputy Principal before 8.40am on the date of the appointment or put into her post box. The Deputy Principal will sign this note to acknowledge permission for the student to be released to the care of the parent/guardian.
- Parent/Guardian or a previously nominated person must sign the students out at the main office, when they are leaving the school. If they are returning, they must sign back in.
- If a student has **not given a note of explanation** to the Deputy Principal, and a parent wishes to take his/her daughter out of school during school time, then the parent/guardian must speak with the Principal/Deputy Principal.

***The school Code of Behaviour contains the procedures which will be followed if the student leaves the school premises without permission.***

### **Holidays**

- Students should not be taken out of school for holidays. This has the potential to damage her education. It is very difficult for any student to catch up with school work that has been missed. If a parent/legal guardian wishes to take their daughter out of school on a holiday, then the Principal must be notified in advance.

### **Students who feel unwell**

- Students should inform the subject teacher, if they feel unwell, before leaving the classroom.
- The student should then report immediately to the main office. A fellow student may accompany the ill student with the teacher's permission.
- The School will contact the parent/legal guardian if the illness persists. Students should not use their own mobile phone to contact parents/legal guardians.
- If it is necessary for the student to go home, the student must inform the Principal/DP, before contacting home.
- A parent/legal guardian or other previously nominated person must sign the student out at the main office.
- The school reserves the right to call a doctor or other emergency service if considered necessary.
- An ill student may be released to emergency services as may be necessary. The parent/legal guardian/Principal/DP must sign the student out at the main office.

### **Lunchtime**

- Students may not leave the school grounds at lunchtime.

### **Late arrival for school**

#### **Student must be punctual at all times. School starts at 8.40am**

- Supervision of students on premises takes place between 8.15am and 3.45pm.
- Any student arriving late to school should come with a written explanation from parents/legal guardians.
- A late note stamp from the main office is required in the student's journal for entry into class. It is then recorded on VS Ware by the office staff.
- If a student is late on more than 3 occasions without an explanation, they will be required to do a detention.

### **Implementation**

**This policy will be implemented by the Board in a spirit of partnership through consultation with the school partners, within the available resources of the school.**

### **Adult Students**

For the removal of doubt and the avoidance of misunderstanding, any student who attains her majority whilst duly registered as a student of Presentation Secondary School, Ballyphehane, is deemed by the Board of Management to be bound by the policy of the Board in respect of attendance except that it shall be the said student who shall discharge on her own behalf those powers, duties and functions ascribed here-in to parent(s)/Legal guardian(s) in respect of a student who is a minor.

## Success Criteria

The Board of Management, in consultation with the staff, Parents' Council and Students' Council, will establish criteria upon which the on-going success of the Attendance Policy is measured:

Success criteria may include:

- ✓ Attendance rates
- ✓ Improved communication with parents/guardians
- ✓ Encouraging parents/guardians to inform and explain absences
- ✓ Improved time-keeping
- ✓ Overall participation in school
- ✓ Homework/study: improvements, more participation

School Management will carry out monitoring of the policy. Teaching staff will be central to the monitoring and evaluation of students' attendance.

## Review Procedures

The Board of Management, in consultation with the school partners, will review this policy annually, unless circumstances require an earlier review.

It will be the responsibility of the Principal to bring the Policy before the Board for review at the appropriate time.

## Ratification

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of

19 June 2018

Signed:

[Signature]

Chairperson

Date: 19-06-18