

Coiste Gairmoideachais Cho. Chill Mhantáin

County Wicklow Vocational Education Committee

Attendance/Participation Policy for 2nd Level Schools

1. Parents:

- 1.1 The Committee affirms that parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school going age attend school regularly once they are enrolled at any of the committee's schools, and bearing in mind that they are obliged to complete three years of post primary education up to their sixteenth birthday.
- 1.2 The Committee affirms that parents have a social responsibility to ensure that students attend school regularly regardless of age or status and they should ensure that their children complete their education.
- 1.3 The Committee affirms that parents have a statutory obligation to notify the school principal or his/her nominee, in the prescribed manner, of absences on part of a school day, or on full school days as appropriate and the reasons for such absences.

2. The Principal:

- 2.1 The Committee affirms that the Principal of all schools under the control of the Committee must maintain a register of all students who have been admitted to the school.
- 2.2 The Committee affirms that a student, who has not reached the age of 16 years or who has not completed three years of post primary education, cannot be removed from the register, except
 - a) For inter-school transfer and then only after all details regarding attendance and educational progress have been issued to the new school.
 - b) Where for whatever reason a student is removed from the school under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20 (4).
- 2.3 The Committee affirms that the Principals of all schools under the control of the Committee, shall after admitting a student from another second level school, notify the principal of said school that they have registered said student.
- 2.4 The Committee affirms that the Principals of all schools under the control of the Committee must maintain a record of attendance and non-attendance on each school day or part of a school day of each student registered at the

school, which specifies the fact of attendance or failure to attend and the reasons for such failure.

- 2.5 The Committee affirms that the Principals of all schools under the control of the Committee, must notify the Educational Welfare Board as follows:
- a) Where a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 days.
 - b) Where the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent (for whatever reason) during a school year is not less than 20 days.
 - c) Where, for whatever reason, a student's name is removed from the register in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20(4) and under Section 2.2 above.
 - d) Where in the opinion of the Principal, a student is not attending school regularly and the reasons for such non-attendance.
 - e) In addition, such information should be available to the Board of Management, as appropriate.
- 2.6 The Committee affirms that the Principals of all schools under the control of the Committee may at their discretion, delegate duties regarding school attendance to other professionals working in the school.
- 3. Schools:**
- 3.1 All schools under the control of the Committee are required to maintain a caring and pastoral ethos with regard to students.
- 3.2 All schools under the control of the Committee, shall in as far as is possible be required to co-operate with the Educational Welfare Board and with the Educational Welfare Officer and shall seek to establish good and positive relationships with them.
- 4. Board of Management:**
- 4.1 The Board of Management of all schools under the control of the Committee shall ensure that the statutory obligations of the school with regard to school attendance and participation are adhered to.
- 4.2 The Board of Management of all schools under the control of the Committee shall ensure that a report on attendance levels in the school is submitted to the Educational Welfare Officer, to the Parents' Association and to the Committee not later than 6 weeks after the end of the school year.
- 4.3 The Committee, as data controller for its schools, affirms that data collected in relation to students and parents is governed by the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and that information on file should be used only for the purposes for which it was intended.

4.4 The Board of Management of all schools under the control of the committee shall ensure that an evaluation of the effectiveness of the process, strategy and policy regarding attendance is carried out regularly.

5. Statement of Strategy:

5.1 As per The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 22(1) and 22(2) the Committee requires all schools under its control to draw up a Statement of Strategy with regard to attendance/participation, and subject to the functions of the Minister pursuant to section 7 (1) of the Education Act 1998.

5.2 In addition to the statutory requirements under 5(1) above the Committee requires all schools under its control to promote the following:

- a) The development of whole school structures in a positive and proactive attempt to deal with the issues of attendance and non-attendance.
- b) The fostering of school and community awareness of the effects on school attendance of the following:
 - Participation by students in employment.
 - Entertainment/social activity.
 - The abuse of alcohol and drugs.
- c) Any other strategy that may be relevant to the needs of individual schools and learning centres