

Seamount College

Attendance Strategy

Scope:

The Board of Management, Teaching Staff, Administration Staff , Parents Council, Student Council and students.

Relationship to School's Mission Statement:

Good attendance is promoted in Seamount College by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for his or her own learning and achieve full potential through regular presence in class.

Rationale:

In Seamount College we have identified attendance and punctuality as an area of focus. This strategy is intended to foster a good mature attitude towards attendance and punctuality

Goals:

- To develop a positive approach to attendance and punctuality
- Keep accurate records of students' whereabouts at all times during school hours.
- Students learn to take responsibility for their own punctuality and attendance.
- Parents appreciate the vital role they play in their child's attendance
- Reduce the rate of absenteeism and encourage full attendance where possible
- The early detection and correction of patterns of poor attendance and punctuality
- To maintain an effective attendance record-keeping system through VShare.

A positive approach to attendance and punctuality:

- Good attendance is promoted in the school by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for his or her own learning and achieve full potential through regular presence in class.

- Throughout the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the implications for them of irregular attendance. This is also promoted through the Pastoral Care programme.
- The Year Head and/or Class Tutor meet with students for whom attendance or punctuality has been identified as an issue.
- Reports to Parents/Guardians include a record of attendance for the period in question.
- Records of attendance are available to parents to view on VShare logging in using their username and password
- The school's end of year reward system acknowledges excellent attendance.

How attendance is monitored:

- The school day begins at 9.00am. Students are expected to be in their classrooms by 8.55am.
- Lunch is from 1.10 p.m. to 2.00p.m. and students are expected to be in their classrooms by 1.55 p.m.
- Teachers take role call on VShare for each class.
- Times in between lessons should only be used to prepare for the next lesson.
- Students who arrive late to school **must** report to the office and sign in.
- When a student is absent, he/she must have an absence note in their journal on the day they return to school. Journals are monitored by class tutors and Year Heads.
- A student may not leave the school during the school day without permission.
- If a student needs to attend an appointment, he/she must present the relevant signed note in their journal, to the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head. Then at the allotted time the student must sign out, on presentation of the absence note, in the secretary's office.
- If a student has no note **they may not leave** the school without the permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal.

- Parents/Guardians must notify the school by phone or email, as early as possible as to the reason for student's absence.
- Students will receive sanctions for unexcused absences in accordance with school's Code of Behaviour.
- Where students are absent due to sports/other school related activities, this will be recorded as such on VShare. Teacher in charge will post a list of students involved in the staff room. If a listed student is absent for some other reason, the teacher in charge will notify the office.
- A text message will be sent via VShare to all households re absent students.

Strategy Content:

Roles and Responsibility:

Principal:

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendances and absences of students
- To monitor attendance records regularly
- To ensure reports to the Education Welfare Officer are submitted as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences/withdrawal of students from the school.
- To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress.

Deputy Principal:

- To carry out spot checks on absences and punctuality
- To work in co-operation with the Principal, Year Heads, Class tutors, Class teachers and Administration staff to implement the School Policy.
- To liaise with the Year Head and Care Team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance

- To meet, along with Year Head, students who had unauthorised absence from class
- To inform new teachers of their obligations with regards to recording attendance

Year Head:

- To monitor regularly the attendance records on Vsware system for the given year
- To amend on a weekly basis, the records on Vsware from absence unexplained to absence explained where relevant
- To liaise with the Tutors and Care Teams to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance
- To meet, along the Deputy Principal, those students for whom attendance or punctuality is a problem in order to discuss the issue
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and or/patterns of absences are developing and to notify the Deputy Principal of same.
- To contact parents/guardians where appropriate, re student's number of absences on reaching fifteen days during an academic year
- To remind the students during assemblies of the Year Group of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- To conduct an attendance and punctuality audit at the end of each term.

Class tutor:

- To check absence notes from parents/guardians
- To liaise with the Year Head in the event of absences not being explained or where any other problems may arise in relation to attendance and punctuality.

Class teacher:

- To record the attendance of every class every day.
- To record in student's journal lateness
- To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and insist on punctuality

- Set example by their own punctuality
- Acknowledge students, welcome them back and support them upon their return to school.
- Communicate with parents/guardians at parent teacher meetings on the importance and value of good attendance

Parent/Guardian:

- To support the school's Attendance strategy in compliance with their legal responsibilities
- To ensure regular and punctual attendance of students and avoid unnecessary absences. Where possible, to arrange appointments outside of school time.
- To notify the school by phone/email on the morning of student's absence
- To notify the school in advance of any planned absences from school
- To provide a written explanation for the student's absence on the first day of return to school.
- To provide the school reliable contact telephone numbers
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this strategy for the withdrawal of students from school during the school day.
- To acknowledge and where necessary, reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues
- To arrange , where possible, all elective appointments for after school or during school holidays
- Signing in and out of school:- any student who needs to leave the school early must be collected by a parent/guardian.
- Student taking ill during lunchtime while off the school premises – the school must be notified immediately.

Student:

- To be in class on time
- Students must be signed in for late arrival at school and must be signed out if leaving early, by the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head or any available teacher.
- It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation (notes, sick certs etc..) and present them to the Principal for all appointments that will prevent them from attending class.
- Following an absence from school, to present a written explanation to their Year Head in the Student Journal on the day of return to class.
- To abide by the School's Code of Behaviour. Students will receive sanctions for unexplained absences and lateness in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission will result in detention.

If a student is suspended:

A student may be absent from school due to a suspension for breach of Code of Behaviour, in such instances parents will be consulted in advance and students are expected to use their time productively by applying themselves to their studies. In such instances, where a student is suspended, they should not be on the school premises or engaged in any school activity as there may be insurance implications.