

St. Ailbe's School

Whole School Policy

On

Student Retention

Introduction:

An attendance and Participation Policy has been developed by the partners in Education at St. Ailbe's School to help the students stay in school. A recent report conducted by the ESRI which was published in December 2007 highlights how school attendance levels vary between different social classes. This report was prepared in conjunction with National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). The main findings in this report are that 'there are higher levels of non-attendance in the area of disadvantage. Also that it is known that boys are more at risk than girls'. Another aspect of their findings is that school organisation and ethos can also make a huge difference to student attendance. In particular students tend to respond to positive interaction with teachers and to teachers expectations in terms of their attendance levels.

In St. Ailbes School the following policy has been adopted to help keep pupils in school.

Mission Statement:

- To provide quality education that meets the actual needs of young people in the best quality learning environment, creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence between students, parents, and staff which enhances self-esteem and self worth.
- To help all pupils reach their full potential in all areas of life, moral. Academic, social and vocational, recognising that there is no single standard that applies to all.
- To help pupils grow in confidence with a positive outlook on life and with the due consideration for others and for property.

Objectives:

The objectives of this policy are:

- 1 To create a school ethos which encourages students to stay in school.

- 2 To raise awareness of non-attendance with school management, teachers, students, parents/guardians.
- 3 To take practical actions to prevent incidents of non-attendance e.g. to ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all non-attendees are monitored daily.
- 4 To develop procedures for reporting and recording incidents of non-attendance.
- 5 To develop a programme of support for those affected by home situations which may lead to non-attendance at school.
- 6 To work with, and through, the various local agencies to eliminate non-attendance.

Section A

Monitoring of Attendance

After roll call each morning names of non-attending students, and names of students who are late are sent to office.

Attendance officer, Mr John Kelly, telephones the parents/Guardians of non-attendants. On speaking with Parent / Guardians to establish Bona-fida cases.

Records are kept of all non-attendants

Records are analysed on a weekly basis to highlight students at risk.

Students at Risk

When students are identified as to being at risk, due to a high percentage of non-attendance days, lates etc., the HSCL officer, Ms. Noreen Ryan, School Completion Programme team lead by Mr Tony Nolan, are all informed.

HSCL makes planned visits to the students home to establish cause of their non-attendance.

The School Completion Programme Team in conjunction with the HSCL and Mr Kelly instigate their action plan.

Action Plan

Codes	Reasons for Targeting
1	Has severe literacy problems/ learning difficulties
2	Participating in Anti- Social behaviour.
3	Be withdrawn, Silent, Non-participative, victim of bullying.
4	Be susceptible to economic Stress/distress in family
5	Has a family history of early school leaving.
6	Has mentioned a desire to leave school early.
7	Belongs to a minority cultural group, such as immigrant or traveller family
8	Is absent from school for lengthily or regular periods of time
9	On Report

Interventions

Code No.	Interventions
1	Homework Club
2	Learning Support
3	Individual Education plan
4	Copping-On Programme
5	Case Conferencing
6	Knockanrawly Family Therapy
7	Other referral-outside agency
8	Holiday Programme Easter
9	Holiday Programme Summer
10	Breaktime and Lunchtime activities
11	Drama
12	Monitor attendance
13	Career Guidance and Counselling
14	Basketball
15	Womans Group
16	Orienteering and Sports
17	Team Teaching
18	Transition Programme
19	Athletics
20	Library Activities