



**St Gerald's DLS College
Policy on Attendance**

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1.0: Introduction

This policy was devised in consultation with the teaching staff in our school, the Parents Association and the Student Council. It was submitted to the Board of Management. It is being reviewed as part of the School Development Planning Process.

In devising this policy, we have considered the democratic and child centered principles of this school. In accordance with the Education Welfare Act, this policy has as its purpose the promotion of maximum attendance by each pupil. The importance of regular attendance cannot be over emphasised as poor attendance affects all aspects of school life.

Through the collaboration of class teachers and Class and Year Heads, we strive to maximise attendance among all pupils, paying particular attention to those at risk.

2.0: School Ethos

“St Gerald’s College, is a Lasallian Centre and the mission of the school is to give a human and Christian education to the young, with special concern for the disadvantaged”.

3.0: Scope

This policy applies to all students, parents, teaching staff and the Board of Management of St Gerald’s College.

4.0: Objectives

Through implementation of this policy, St. Gerald’s College expects to:

- Encourage full attendance at school.
- Highlight the importance of punctuality and attendance amongst students and parents.
- Positively enforce punctual attendance morning and afternoon and at each class period throughout the school day.
- Maintain an effective attendance record-keeping system through our school administration system.
- Encourage students to form a habit of good attendance.
- Encourage parents to send children to school in all but exceptional circumstances.
- Develop suitable intervention strategies to improve school attendance and punctuality.



5.0: School Attendance Strategy

A Positive Approach:

- Full attendance is promoted in the school through a culture of high expectation which encourages each student to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Across the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the long-term implications for them of irregular attendance.
- Twice yearly reports to parents/guardians provide a record of attendance and punctuality.

5.1: School

- Each teacher records attendance at the beginning of each class period.
- Parents of absent students for the AM Roll Call are notified by SMS.
- Phone calls may be made by Class and Year Heads or Deputy Principal to check/verify attendance.
- A record of days absent and late attendance is given to Parents/Guardians as part of the Christmas and Summer school reports.
- Teachers have the opportunity at both Parent-Teacher meetings and on school reports to make reference to the lack of progress made by students due to absenteeism and/or poor punctuality.

5.2: Role of Parents/ Guardians

- Parents/Guardians have a primary responsibility to ensure that children of school-going age attend school.
- Parents/Guardians need to be mindful of the educational importance of full attendance when scheduling appointments or family events which may necessitate the withdrawal of a student from school.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing a written explanation for all absences. These notes must be written in the Student Journal. This should be done on the day of the child's return to school.
- Parents/Guardians must provide written notes in the student's Journal explaining reasons for lateness.



- Students will not be allowed leave the school for appointments without prior written parental notification.
- To make appointments, where possible, outside of school hours.
- If Parents/Guardians are aware in advance that a student will be absent for any part of the school day, they should notify the school.

5.3: Students

Students must adhere to the following:

- To be in attendance and ready for class at 9.05am.
- To be in attendance at 1.55pm (Monday & Tuesday) and at 1.40pm (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) for afternoon class.
- To always report to the office if you are late. This will be recorded and sanctions may be imposed for late attendance.
- Submit a parental written explanation for absence to their Class/Year Head on their return to school.
- Present notes to their Class/Year Head from parents/guardians which explain their late attendance for school.
- To sign out at the office having presented a note to your Class Head or Year Head outlining permission to leave and the reason why you are leaving school during the day.
- To sign in at the office if you are returning to school during the school day.
- If a student has no note, he may not leave the school without first obtaining permission from the Principal or Deputy Principal AND signing the sign-out book in the office. The school will also contact Parents/Guardians by phone.

Students who become ill during the course of the day should inform their Class or Year Head. Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the school. In this case, the student will only be allowed leave the school when collected by a Parent/Guardian from the school office.

6.0: Sanctions

Disciplinary actions consistent with the school's Code of Behaviour will be imposed by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Class/Year Heads for absences from school without permission.



The Deputy Principal will impose sanctions for late attendance consistent with the school's Code of Behaviour.

7.0: Tusla – Child & Family Agency

Under legislation, every child must attend school regularly up to 16 years of age or complete at least 3 years education in a post-primary school; whichever comes later. The Child & Family Agency was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

As a parent, you must notify the school if your child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that explanations must be given in writing. The school will notify Tusla if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise for concern. This is outlined below:

7.1: The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 18

Where a child is absent from the school at which he or she is registered during part of the school day, or for a school day or more than a school day, the parent of such child shall, in accordance with procedures specified in the Code of Behaviour, prepared by the school under section 23, notify the Principal of the school of the reasons for the child's absence.

7.2: The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21 (4)

The Principal of the school concerned shall inform, by notice of writing to the Educational Welfare Officer where:

- 1) A student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days.
- 2) The aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from a recognised school during a school year is not less than 20 days.

8.0: Implementation & Review:

8.1: Implementation

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

The use of school resources is at all times subject to the permission of the Board of Management.



8.2: Success Criteria

Success criteria will include:

- Improved attendance rates.
- Improved explanations for absences.
- Improved timekeeping.
- Improved communication with parents.

8.3: Monitoring and Evaluation:

The Board of Management will carry out monitoring of the policy. Teaching Staff, Parents Association and the Student Council will be central to this monitoring and any evaluation.

8.4: Review Procedures

The Board of Management, in consultation with the school partners will review this policy every two years. It will be the responsibility of the Principal to bring the policy before the Board for review at the appropriate time.

9.0: Ratification

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of: 14-10-2016

Signed: *Brendan Forde*

Brendan Forde

Chairperson of BoM

Signed: *Daniel Hyland*

Daniel Hyland

Secretary of BoM

Date of next review: _____