



ROCKWELL COLLEGE
ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

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1. Policy Statement

Rockwell College (“the school”) recognises its role in providing structures and a school climate aimed at encouraging full attendance and participation by its pupils. It subscribes to and conforms to the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and all relevant statutory legislation in relation to attendance and participation in school. This policy is a statement of those structures and the roles played by each of the stakeholders in this aspect of the education of the pupils, while appreciating the primary role of parents/guardians (“parents”) in ensuring the attendance of their children at school.

2. Structures to ensure attendance

The following structures apply to allow the school to maintain accurate records of attendance/lateness, as required of all schools.

- All pupils will report to Assembly by 8:40am
- Roll-call will be taken in Assembly and the attendance logged by school staff.
- Pupils arriving late are required to sign-in at the Secretary’s office. A note is required to explain the late arrival.
- In the event of a full day’s absence, the pupil must present a note explaining the absence to the satisfaction of school management. This note should give the pupil’s full name, year group, explanation of absence and parent’s signature. Where there is sensitivity regarding the reason for the absence, the school is happy that a parent would speak directly to the Principal when convenient.
- Pupils who have been absent are required to present a note to teachers at the earliest available opportunity. Failure to do so may result in being refused admittance to class.

3. Responsibility of parties

(a) Parents

- Rockwell College affirms that parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school-going age attend school regularly once they are enrolled at school, and of bearing in mind that they are obliged to complete three years of post-primary education up to their sixteenth birthday.
- Rockwell College 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.
- Rockwell College affirms that parents have a statutory obligation to notify the school principal or his/her nominee, in the form of a written explanation or a doctor’s cert, explaining the reason for each absence.

(b) Principal

- A register of all students who have been admitted to the school will be maintained by the Principal of Rockwell College in accordance with DES regulations and instructions.
- Rockwell College 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

- (i) For inter-school transfer and then only after all details regarding attendance and educational progress have been issued to the new school at their request.
- (ii) Where for whatever reason a student is removed from the school under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20(4)
- The Principal has the responsibility to ensure the maintenance of a record of attendance and non-attendance on each school day or part thereof of each pupil registered at the school, which specifies the fact of attendance or failure to attend and the reasons for such failure.
- Rockwell College affirms that the Principal must notify the Educational Welfare Board as follows:
 - (i) Where a pupil is suspended for a period of not less than 6 days.
 - (ii) Where the aggregate number of school days on which a pupil is absent (for whatever reason) during a school year is not less than 20 days
 - (iii) Where, for whatever reason, a pupil's name is removed from the register in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20(4) and under Section 3 (b) (i) above.
 - (iv) Where in the opinion of the Principal, a pupil is not attending school regularly and the reasons for such non-attendance. In addition, such information should be available to the Board of Management, as appropriate.
- The Principal may, at her discretion, delegate duties regarding school attendance to other professionals working in the school.

(c) Rockwell College

- In order to encourage attendance and full participation, Rockwell College adopts a caring and pastoral ethos with regard to pupils.
- Rockwell College is required to co-operate with the Educational Welfare Board and with the Educational Welfare Officer and shall seek to establish good and positive relationships in the interests of our pupils.
- The policies of Rockwell College, including but not limited to Code of Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy, are structured in such a way as to support attendance & participation.

(d) Board of Management

- The Board of Management shall ensure that the statutory obligations of the College with regard to College attendance and participation are adhered to.
- The Board of Management shall submit a report on attendance levels in Rockwell College to the Educational Welfare Officer, NEWB as required and when requested.
- In this case, the Board will ensure that all information is collected and issued in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988), the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and in accordance with the Data Protection Policy of the College.
- The Board will review the effectiveness of this policy and oversee amendments as may be required by need or determined by legislation.

(e) Teachers

The teaching staff of the College has a key responsibility in ensuring that attendance and participation is monitored. The following responsibilities are required to be upheld by teachers:

- An accurate record of class attendance
- Raising concerns with the Year Dean in the case of frequent absence.

- Ensuring that a list of pupils scheduled to be absent on a given day, for a given activity, is placed on the agreed noticeboard and staff notified of the event via the E-Portal system.
- Reminding pupils of their responsibility to catch up on work missed through absence.

(f) Pupils

The pupils of the College carry significant responsibilities for lateness and attendance and their recognition of these responsibilities will enhance their own learning and their school experience. The following responsibilities lie directly with the pupil:

- Presentation of notes explaining absence or late arrival
- Making every effort to catch up on work missed in a timely manner
- Giving notice to teachers and the school in advance of absences when possible and practical.

4. Strategies

Rockwell College uses the following strategies to promote good attendance and participation:

1. Communication with parents.
2. The rewarding of pupils regarding good attendance/participation.
3. The adoption of a pastoral approach with a view to supporting pupils with attendance /participation issues.
4. Regular evaluation of the school's operation as it relates to attendance/participation, with a view to encouraging an atmosphere conducive to good attendance /participation.
5. The provision of a wide and inclusive range of extra-curricular activities, aimed at promoting involvement.
6. Advice on how to improve and, if required, a reprimand..
7. Loss of privileges, including (but not limited to) withdrawal of permission to attend school trips/ matches.
8. Detention during breaks or outside of school hours.
9. An Induction Programme for incoming First Year pupils to support and encourage positive participation.

It is the responsibility of pupils who are absent from class/school for any reason to find out details of work missed. This applies also to pupils who miss class due to sporting or other extra-curricular activities.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Rockwell College on April 20th 2014

Sr. Ena Quinlan

20/04/ 2014

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date