

Attendance Strategy
Corpus Christi Girls National School

Rationale

This statement was prepared in consultation with the staff, parents, and the Board of Management of Corpus Christi GNS in order to highlight the strategies in place to foster an appreciation of learning among pupils and to encourage their regular attendance and punctuality. This strategy has been formulated to ensure that the school is compliant with legislation that provides for the welfare of the pupils in its care including;

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)

School profile

Corpus Christi GNS is a girls' school under the patronage of the Catholic archbishop of Dublin. There are 17 mainstream classes and a staff of 21 teachers, 3 special needs assistants, a part time caretaker and a secretary. At present, (2017) there are 450 pupils enrolled in the school. Pupils come from the immediate Drumcondra parish and from other nearby areas including Glasnevin, Santry, Beaumont, Finglas and Marino.

Relationship to the ethos of the school.

The mission statement for the school states that;

Corpus Christi is a Catholic Primary school in which we strive to learn together in a happy and safe environment, where everyone is valued, respected and encouraged to do their best.'

Regular attendance at school and being on time for school are key factors in ensuring that pupils benefit fully from their education. Corpus Christi GNS aims to foster excellent relationships and cooperation between parents/guardians and staff and to maintain a culture of high expectations for pupils learning, participation and attendance.

How attendance is monitored

Attendance is monitored on a daily basis by each class teacher. School opens for the reception of pupils at 8.50a.m. . The infant classes go home at 1.30p.m. and the other classes go home at 2.30p.m. Teachers take the responsibility for calling the roll every day and for recording the reasons provided for any pupil absences. The class roll is called every morning at 9.50a.m. Any pupil who is not present at that point is marked absent. The roll may not be altered once it is called. The main school door is closed at 9.10a.m. and a written record of any late arrivals or early departures are recorded at the secretary's office.

Parents are required to provide a note to explain each absence of their child. These notes will be retained by the school. Parents are also required to provide a note if their child is departs school early. When a child is sent home because she is sick, a record will be kept by the school.

Annual Attendance Report

The school makes an annual attendance report to TUSLA at the end of each academic school year. The information submitted in this report includes:

- Total Number of days lost through student absence
- Total number of students who were absent for 20 days or more.

- Total number of students expelled in respect of whom all appeal processes have been exhausted or not availed of during the school year.
- Total number of students who were suspended for any number of days during the school year.

In addition the school makes three other reports to TUSLA during each school year. A school is obliged to report to the Child and Family agency (TUSLA) when

- A student has been suspended for 6 days or more cumulatively
- A student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- A student's name is to be removed from the school register for whatever reason
- A principal is concerned about a student's attendance
- The Board of Management decides to expel a student

Target Setting

Annual attendance in the school is currently above 95%. The average monthly attendance ranges from 92% to 97% depending on the time of year. In general monthly averages for the month of June are lower as a small number of parents take their children out of school to go on holidays at this time. The target is to maintain the current levels of attendance and improve the monthly averages for June by informing parents of their obligations regarding attendance.

Whole School Approach

The school promotes and encourages full attendance by all pupils. This is communicated to the parents and the school community through the following means

1. The daily, prompt recording of attendance and absences by the class teachers.
2. Daily recording of any early departures or late arrivals.
3. Newsletters to parents /guardians
4. Reporting any concerns and monthly attendance averages to the Board of Management.
5. Dissemination of the attendance requirements via the school website.
6. Staff meetings

Strategies for promoting good attendance

The following strategies will be employed to maintain the current good attendance:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- Corpus Christi GNS will promote development of good self-esteem and self worth in its pupils (see Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy).
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs in accordance with DES guidelines.
- The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Frequent reminders about punctuality and attendance will be given through the PA system in the morning.
- The class teacher will keep a daily record of attendance in Aladdin.
- The Principal will inform the NEWB:
 - When a pupil has been missing for twenty or more days during the course of the school year.

- When a pupil has been suspended from school more than once under the Code of Behaviour.

Identification of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems.

The following strategies may be employed to identify students at risk of developing school attendance problems:

- On transfer to , attendance records will be sought from previous schools on pupil attendance.
- Class teachers will inform the Principal of any concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Contact with various agencies who are involved with such students.

Strategies used in the Event of Poor Attendance

- Contacting parents on an informal basis when a child is absent regularly.
- Discussing school attendance with the student (where appropriate), with a view to finding an explanation for the absence and thereby a solution.
- Supporting pupils through the school (Principal, Deputy Principal, Class Teacher).
- In the event of prolonged absence/irregular attendance the school will request a meeting with the child and parent to try to identify and resolve any barriers to attendance.
- Contacting the N.E.W.B. /NEPS/HSE or other outside agencies as appropriate

School's role in relation to attendance

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management, the Principal and the class teachers to implement this strategy for attendance. The school will endeavor to do this through fostering excellent home school links, encouraging links with the community, providing excellent teaching and learning opportunities for the pupils and ensuring correct monitoring and reporting of attendance.

Close home school and community links will be fostered through;

- Continued co-operation between the school and the Parents Association.
- Attendance at parents/teacher meetings.
- Attendance at school events (eg concerts, Masses,tours/trips etc).
- Regular newsletters to parents
- Availability of teachers to meet with parents
- Sacramental preparation with the parish
- Co-operation with Community Gardaí programmes.
- Charity and community events
- Liaison with our local GAA club and other local sports clubs.

School Principal/Deputy Principal

The school Principal/Deputy principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer If a pupil is not attending school regularly and when a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.

- When a pupil's name is removed from the register. Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
- Make all required attendance returns to TUSLA.

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the principal of concerns he/she may have regarding the attendance of any pupils.

Monitoring of the strategy

The Board of Management, the staff and the whole school community will be mindful at all times of:

- The identification of aspects of the operation and management of the school and of the teaching of the school curriculum that may contribute to problems relating to school attendance on the part of certain students.
- The need to review this strategy into the future to accommodate the changing needs of the school and of its population.

Dates for implementation and review.

This strategy will be fully operational from September 2017 following ratification by the school's Board of Management. It will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary. The date for next review is June 2020.

Signed: Denis McCarthy

Chairperson Board of Management

Date: November 2017