

De La Salle High School

“Promoting Good Attendance”

INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential. (Circular 2013/13)

De La Salle High School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

School Mission Statement.

“Take Care, Show Care, Teach Care, Evoke Care”

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at De La Salle High School.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with Education Welfare Service and other External Agencies.

Role of the School

1. The Principal at De La Salle High School has overall responsibility for school attendance.
2. The Senior Leader with Pastoral responsibilities should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to the Principal’s attention after Heads of Year have dealt with attendance concerns within their year group by following school procedures.
3. The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at meetings on a regular basis.
4. Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at registration and during every lesson.
5. Class teachers and or designated staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to each respective Year Heads attention following school procedures.
6. To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of

Education Circular 2013/13.

7. De La Salle High School believes that a proactive, co-ordinated approach to pupil attendance through the implementation of this circular will improve whole school attendance.
8. De La Salle High School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

1. Parents / Guardians have a legal duty to ensure that every child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise. (Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986).
2. It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. A parent/guardian should phone school before 10.00am giving the pupil's name, Form Class and reason for absence.
3. This should be confirmed with a written note in the relevant section of the student's diary when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.
4. Pupils are expected to be in school at 9.00am for registration / assembly. It is the responsibility of parents / guardians to ensure that their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and recorded on a pupil's attendance record.
5. If your child appears reluctant to attend school, please discuss the matter promptly with your child's Form Teacher or Head of Year to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.
6. Medical and or dental appointments should not be made during school hours (except in the case of emergencies).

Role of Pupils

1. Each pupil at De La Salle High School has a duty to ensure that he attends school punctually and regularly.
2. If absent from school a written note from a parent/guardian in the relevant section of your diary must be provided to your Form Teacher when you return.
3. It is your responsibility to get caught up on work missed as quickly as possible.

4. If you have a planned appointment (medical or otherwise) a note or covering letter must be presented in the office to be signed by a Senior Teacher, thus allowing the school to plan accordingly.

The school advises all of its pupils that appointments are best planned for after school hours or during holiday times where possible.

Family Holidays during Term Time

1. Family holidays should not take place during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning.
2. In exceptional circumstances, if a family holiday is deemed necessary, permission should be sought in writing from the Principal.
3. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

Education Welfare Service

1. The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service have a legal responsibility to make sure that parents / guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.
2. Regular attendance is an essential requirement for educational results and where attendance difficulties exist or a pupil's attendance falls below 85%, Education Welfare Service (EWS) will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

1. The parent or guardian of the pupil will be expected to inform the school by telephone on the first morning of any absence i.e. before 10.00am.
A written note must follow this up from the parent or guardian on the first day of the young person's return to school.
2. The Education Welfare Officer, Pastoral Senior Teacher, Head of year and Form Teacher along with the School Office Administrator will share responsibility on a daily basis for the co-ordination of pupil non-attendance issues.
3. Where appropriate the school language assistant will support staff in communicating with New Comer Pupils parents/guardians.
4. It is the responsibility of the Form Teacher/Year Head or cover teacher to ensure that the registration is completed online by the end of the registration period.
5. Where a parent or guardian has not contacted the school on the first day of any absence an automated message: 'Truancy Call' will make contact with the home.

6. Office staff will relay messages from the home to the form teacher.
7. The form teachers will inform office staff of reasons known in advance of any young person absence from school.
7. Where a pupil continues to be late for registration a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian informing them of this fact and appropriate strategies will be put in place.
8. Medical or dental appointments should not be made during school hours.
9. Pupils may not leave any class or absent themselves without permission, nor may they leave the school at any time without a written request or phone call from a parent or guardian. Such consent should only be sought, and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
10. Pupils who are granted permission to leave the school must obtain from the general office before leaving the school a permission slip. This permission slip is signed by a Senior Teacher (SMT) and this slip is returned to the class teacher before the pupil leaves.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance of New Comer Pupils

1. When monitoring New Comer attendance the Senior Teacher and the student support officer with the support of the Language Assistant will work with both pupil and parent to ensure full attendance.

“Truancy Call” is an automated system which will contact parents or guardians to advise that their child is not in school on that particular day. This system will be deployed should the parent not have advised the school by telephone as to the reason for absence before 10.00am on the first day of absence.