Attendance and Participation

Policy

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

Date: 12th February 2019

Signature:

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Commenced: 2010	
Date of last Review: February 2019	
Review due: 2021	

Templeogue Road, Terenure,
Dublin 6w, D6WKF44

T: 01 490 3241
F: 01 492 2511

E: principal@olschool.ie
W: www.olschool.ie

Principal:
Marguerite Gorby

Deputy Principals:
Stephen Rhatigan, Aoife Ronan

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

'Our Lady's School is a community that stands for Christian values. The education it provides is aimed at a search for truth, the formation of the Christian faith and the growth and personal development of each individual.'

Excerpt from Mission Statement

Rationale

The Attendance and Participation Policy has been developed as part of Our Lady's School's commitment to providing a supportive learning environment, which enables all students who attend the school to achieve their full potential. The school endeavours to co-operate with parents/guardians in promoting the full and balanced development of their children and in instilling in students the importance of attendance, punctuality and participation in all areas of life.

The school has a duty to monitor attendance, and to act on non-attendance, so that students can be supported to complete their programmes of study.

Attendance is a key component in student retention, progression, achievement and employability. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning by attending classes regularly are more likely to:

➢ enjoy a rewarding experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed
➢ successfully complete their schooling
➢ achieve better results

Procedures and Practices in Place to Ensure Attendance and Participation

➢ The school uses the Anseo Time and Attendance Management System and VSWare to monitor attendance and punctuality.
➢ Students are required to register their attendance on arrival each morning by swiping in with a personal identification card.
➢ **All students who come late to school must sign in and have their journal stamped with their arrival time. This is recorded in a "Late Book".**
➢ Parents are asked to communicate details regarding their daughter's absence via the school app.
➢ Texts are sent each morning to parents of absent students unless the school has been notified in advance of their daughter's absence.
➢ Parents/Guardians are asked to contact the school early in the morning if their daughter will be absent that day or if she needs to leave early.
➢ Year Teams monitor attendance and punctuality patterns.
➢ Parents/Guardians are contacted by phone and letter where necessary.
➢ Parents/Guardians have access to their daughter's attendance and punctuality records on VSWare.
➢ Form Teachers meet their class at afternoon registration each day to monitor attendance.
➢ Subject teachers take attendance for each class on VSWare.
➢ When deemed necessary Tusla or other relevant agencies may be referred to for support.
➢ Students' parents/guardians are contacted at times to verify legitimacy of notes.

Strategies and Practices to encourage student participation

- ➢ Proactive and consistent whole school policies are in place to encourage attendance.
- ➢ Teachers use a wide range of teaching methodologies in order to engage the students in the learning process.
- ➢ Teacher expectation that all students can succeed academically has a positive influence on student engagement and attendance.
- ➢ The individual learning needs of students are identified and school resources are used to provide appropriate support in so far as possible.
- ➢ The Year Team (Year Head and Form Teachers) encourage participation by offering support during dedicated contact time.
- ➢ Pastoral intervention by the Guidance Counsellors to support students who are experiencing personal difficulties.
- ➢ The House system gives students a sense of identity and helps them to get to know students from other year groups.
- ➢ The House system supports student participation in school through various activities and fund-raising initiatives.
- ➢ Students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- ➢ Student Council encourages student participation in the running of the school.
- ➢ Noticeboards, the intercom, the school app and the website are used to inform students of activities and achievements.
- ➢ The Year Team recognise the importance of monitoring punctuality. Lateness can be an indication of the beginning of an attendance problem (Amsterdam Project).
- ➢ Students who have a full attendance record for the year are acknowledged at the end of the year.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of this policy will be carried out by senior management in conjunction with staff and the Board of Management.

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