



Nagle Community College Attendance Policy



(In reading this policy document, please refer to Appendix I which incorporates the necessary changes to our policy in light of the COVID-19 pandemic)

Mission Statement: Nagle Community College is a centre of education that encourages the holistic development of all in an environment which is caring, respectful and just.

Our School strives:

- To nurture the academic and personal development of each individual in a caring and safe environment within our school community
- To enhance the self-esteem of each individual in an atmosphere of mutual respect
- To foster good relationships with parents, guardians and the wider community
- To promote a healthy lifestyle among our school community with a strong emphasis on physical and mental well-being

Basic Principles: This policy is a whole-school policy, for implementation by all staff, students, parents and Board of Management. This policy strives to set out the basic principles upon which the School Attendance Strategy will be implemented, sustained and evaluated in our school. This policy has been developed in consultation with the Board of Management, parents, staff, and students.

Rationale: Education is the foundation stone upon which a child's development for later life is built. Parents/guardians are the primary educators and as such are primarily responsible for ensuring that their children receive the education which they have a right to and deserve. The school is here to support and enhance this education. Attendance at school and full participation in school life is, therefore, extremely important. Research has shown that poor attendance and poor participation are directly linked to low educational achievement and early school leaving.

Environment where children want to come to school:

The school wants to create conditions where children see that it is in their own interest to come to school regularly. The school and parents/guardians have certain obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 regarding attendance and participation.

Policy Goals:

- To encourage full attendance at school
- To highlight the importance of punctuality and attendance amongst students and parents
- To positively enforce punctual attendance morning and evening and at each class throughout the day
- To maintain an effective attendance record-keeping system through our eportal system
- To develop suitable intervention strategies to improve school attendance and punctuality

Meeting Educational and Personal Needs:

This policy statement will:

- Assist towards developing a school environment where all students feel supported and welcome in the school, and where their educational and personal needs are met within the resources provided to the school.
- Implement the monitoring and recording aspects of the School's Attendance Strategy.
- Highlight the importance of regular attendance both academic and social.
- Encourage regular attendance and participation in school life.
- Foster an appreciation of learning among students attending Nagle Community College.
- Encourage more communication between parents/guardians and the school.
- Establish procedures for the monitoring of attendance and non-attendance.
- Establish procedures for attendance record-keeping for the school, students, parents/guardians and NEWB.
- Develop suitable intervention strategies to improve school attendance and punctuality.
- Develop working partnerships between the school and other relevant agencies and services, such as the NEWB.
- Support students and parents/guardians where there are attendance issues.

Content of Policy:

Parents/guardians: Nagle Community College strives to maintain regular contact with parents/guardians and recognise that involving them in all aspects of school life is essential to the building of trust and good relationships. The school expects all students registered in the school to attend all timetabled classes every day. If your son/daughter is under 16, or he/she has not yet completed 3 years at post-primary school, it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child (he/she) attends school every day.

As a parent guardian, you must notify the school if your child is absent and inform as to the reason why. On the morning of the student's absence, parents/guardians must phone or email the school and explain the reason as to why their son/daughter is unable to attend school that day.

If your son/daughter is unable to attend then the school will also require an explanation in writing from you, the parent/guardian on their return to school. There is a facility for same in the Student Journal.

Legislative measures: Referral to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB):

5.2 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/guardian 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.

The school has a responsibility and will notify the Educational Welfare Board if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise for concern. The Principal of the school shall inform, by notice of writing to the Educational Welfare Officer.

5.3 The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21 (4).

This report must be made irrespective of the reasons your son/daughter is absent.

If the school is very concerned about the pattern of your child's absences, then the school is also obliged to inform the NEWB. The school will always inform you if a report is being made to the NEWB.

School Calendar and Timetable: Please see the school calendar for the opening and closing times of the school, and the school holidays on the school's website (www.naglecc.ie). Also contained is information about parent-teacher meetings, and staff meetings. In advance of parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings, you will be sent a text as a reminder. Please ensure that you are familiar with your child's class timetable. Your son/daughter will be expected to be in school during the normal school hours.

Medical appointments: If your son/daughter has your permission to leave the school early, for example, a medical appointment, please ensure that you write a note in his/her School Journal to be presented at assembly at 8.50am. On leaving the school, a parent/guardian must sign out the student at reception. Please see the School Code of Behaviour for the procedures which will be followed if your son/daughter leaves the school premises without permission.

Holidays: Only absences relating to activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved can be authorised by the Principal (Section 21(9) of Education Welfare Act, 2000). There may be exceptional circumstances where parents may have to take their child out of school during term time, however please do not take your son/daughter out of school for holidays. This has the potential to damage his/her education. It is very difficult for any child to catch up with what has been missed when out of school for an extended holiday.

Contacting the School: Please contact the school as soon as you can to inform us if your child is unable to attend school on any given day. This can be done by phone to the Secretary's office (021-4358633) or email (office@naglecc.ie).

Extended Absences: If your son/daughter is absent for more than 2 days and has attended a doctor, please provide a doctor's note. Alternatively, please make an appointment to see his/her Class Tutor or Year Head. If you need support from the school in ensuring your child attends school, please contact the school immediately and we will be able to support you.

Recording of non-attendance: Subject Teachers will record your child's attendance or non-attendance in each class throughout the school day.

If your child is late he/she will be admitted to the school by the Principal/Deputy-Principal and be brought to the school office, requested to produce the written explanation from you and have the time of arrival recorded. He/she will not then be recorded as absent but 'late'.

If he/she is late without permission from you, this will be recorded and dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. This will initially mean detention after school, lunch-time detention if your son/daughter is persistently late and a disciplinary card if lateness continues to be an on-going issue.

Reminder letters: If a child has been absent and has not brought in a note of explanation, he/she will be required to do so the following day. If there has been no response to this request, parents/guardians will be contacted to meet with school management. In general, we would advise regular contact with the school to keep us up to date. If the school is aware of the reasons for absence, and is satisfied with these reasons, there will be less difficulty for all concerned. Our primary concern is your child's educational welfare and safety.

School Reports: Term reports will contain the number of days that your child has missed and the number of dates your child was late. If you have any queries about this, please contact the school office.

Communication: At the core of all relationships in the school is mutual respect and understanding, supported by good communication. Our School Attendance Policy will only work if there is good communication between the school, the parent/guardian and your son/daughter. Please feel free at any time to contact the school if there are any matters of concern. All matters will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Nagle Community College staff are always available to support you and your son/daughter and it is important to open lines of communication with the relevant personnel when needs must, among these are the Subject Teachers, Class Teachers, Year Heads, SCP liaison, HSCL, Chaplain, Guidance, Counsellor, Deputy-Principal and Principal.

Contact Details:

School Secretary: Maeve or Trish

Principal: Mr. Jim O'Sullivan

Deputy Principal: Mr. Nicholas O'Keeffe

Telephone No. 021-4358633

Email: office@naglecc.ie

Success Criteria: Success criteria will include:

- Improved attendance rates
- Improved explanations for absence
- Improved timekeeping
- Improved communication with parents/guardians
- Good general work ethic and high student achievement

Monitoring and Evaluation: The Board of Management will carry out monitoring of the policy. Teaching Staff, Parents Council and Students' Council will be central to this monitoring and any evaluation of the policy.

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.

Ratification:

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on

Signed: _____ Chairperson

Date: _____ Next Review Date: _____

COVID-19 Response - Appendix 1

Although a policy goal of Nagle Community College is to encourage full attendance, the following additions to the Attendance Policy are necessary in line with the Health and Safety Control of Covid-19 policy for students developed by the Department of Education and Skills in order to minimise the risk of the introduction of Covid-19 into the school community and to prevent its spread.

- Students are not to attend school for 14 days after returning from travel out of the country in line with the government guidelines for travel.
- Students are not to attend school if displaying Covid-19 like symptoms. These symptoms are similar to the symptoms of cold or flu, the most common of which are: fever, cough, shortness of breath and loss of sense of smell or taste. More information on the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 are available on the HSE website; <http://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>.
- Students displaying symptoms are to remain out of school for such a period as is required, in accordance with HSE/GP advice.
- Students are not to attend school where tested positive for Covid-19 and are to remain out of school for such a period as is required, in accordance with HSE/GP advice.
- Students are to remain out of school if identified by the HSE as a person who has been in contact with another person who has contracted Covid-19 and are to remain out of school for such a period as is required, in accordance with HSE/GP advice.
- Students are not to attend school if a member of their household is displaying Covid-19 like symptoms and are to remain out of school for such a period as is required, in accordance with HSE/GP advice.
- Students are to inform a teacher or other member of staff if feeling unwell in school.
- In that regard students will require to be collected from school by a parent/guardian or persons designated by a parent/guardian for such purpose.
- Parents/guardians must ensure that the school has up to date contact details so that they can be contacted by the school if required.
- Parents/guardians and students must comply with any other directions as advised by the DES and/or the HSE and communicated to the school community.