



Ratoath College Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Introduction & Rationale

Ratoath College is committed to promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality as essential foundations for student success. Regular attendance supports academic achievement, personal development, wellbeing, and the formation of positive life habits.

In Ratoath College, attendance is approached in a balanced manner, combining clear expectations with strong support. Students are expected to attend school regularly and arrive on time, while the school works in partnership with parents/guardians to support students who may experience difficulties with attendance.

Poor attendance and punctuality can have a significant negative impact on:

- A student's academic progress and ability to keep up with coursework
- The continuity of teaching and learning within the classroom
- The learning experience of other students
- The development of positive routines and habits

Attendance is a shared responsibility. Students, parents/guardians and the school community all play an important role in ensuring that students attend regularly and punctually.

Ratoath College's approach is informed by Tusla guidance, which emphasises the importance of promoting a positive attendance culture, early intervention, and providing appropriate supports where attendance concerns arise.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Foster a positive attendance culture within the school
- Support students in developing responsibility for their own attendance
- Ensure early identification and intervention where concerns arise
- Provide appropriate supports for students experiencing attendance difficulties
- Maintain clear and consistent communication with Parents/Guardians
- Ensure a coordinated and consistent whole-school approach
- Comply with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Relationship to School Ethos and Promotion of Attendance

Ratoath College's ethos is captured in the motto: **"Mól an Óige agus Tiocfaidh Sí"** This ethos underpins all aspects of school life, including attendance and punctuality. The school places a strong emphasis on positive relationships, encouragement and recognition, believing that students are more likely to succeed when they feel valued and supported.

Attendance is promoted in a positive and proactive manner through:



- Public recognition at assemblies
- Attendance certificates
- Monthly and ongoing awards
- Year group initiatives
- Class-based rewards

While recognition is primarily focused on full attendance, the school also values and acknowledges improvement in attendance and punctuality. These approaches aim to create a positive culture where attendance is encouraged, recognised and celebrated.

Recording and Monitoring Attendance

Attendance is recorded using the Compass system:

- Morning registration
- The start of each class period throughout the school day

All teachers are expected to record attendance for every class. Attendance is monitored on an ongoing basis by:

- Moltóirí
- Caoimhnoirs
- Class Teachers

These roles include:

- Monitoring attendance patterns
- Identifying emerging concerns
- Addressing attendance issues with students and parents/guardians
- Supporting using early intervention

Attendance is reviewed regularly, including monthly reviews by relevant staff, to ensure that concerns are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

Parents/guardians have access to attendance records via the Compass app.

Absence Procedures

All absences must be explained by a parent/guardian via the Compass app. We require that all absences are appropriately explained and recorded on Compass.

Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from taking students out of school during term time, as this can negatively impact student progress and learning.

Students may only leave the school during the day when collected by a parent/guardian from the front office and signed out



Reporting Absence

- All absences must be submitted via Compass **before 8:30am** on the day of absence
- Absences not submitted by this time will be treated as unexplained
- Unexplained absences will trigger a notification to parents/guardians
- If returning, students must sign back in using the kiosk at the front office

If a student is absent for **three consecutive days without explanation**, a **follow-up phone call** will be made by the Caoimhnoir to parents/guardians.

Leaving School Early

- Requests for early leave must be submitted via Compass before 8:30am on the day.
- Requests submitted after this time will not be authorised.
- Parents/guardians must collect the student from the school and sign them out at the front office.
- These procedures will be followed except in cases of exceptional circumstances as agreed with the student's Moltoir.

Illness During the School Day

- Students who feel unwell must report to their Moltóir.
- A member of staff will contact parents/guardians to arrange collection.
- Students are not permitted to contact parents/guardians directly and must follow this procedure.
- These procedures will be followed except in cases of exceptional circumstances as agreed with the student's Moltoir.

Punctuality Policy

Punctuality is essential to minimise disruption to teaching and learning.

Late Arrival

Punctuality is essential to minimise disruption to teaching and learning.

- Students arriving late must sign in at the front office kiosk
- Late arrivals are recorded on Compass
- All students who arrive late during **Period 1 (8:50–9:40)** will be required to **remain in the library** for the duration of that period.

A late is considered unexcused where no explanation has been submitted via Compass prior to the start of the school day at 8:30am.

Monitoring and Response to Lateness



- A pattern of **3 unexcused lates** will result in a student being placed on a **Punctuality Report** for a **four week** period.

While on report:

- Students are supported in improving punctuality
- Continued lateness will result in further interventions

If the punctuality report does not result in improvement, the issue will escalate through the school's **Ladder of Referral**, which may include:

- Withdrawal of Privileges
- Further engagement with parents/guardians.
- Other measures at the discretion of the Moltoir.

Intervention and Support Strategies

Ratoath College uses a **staged and supportive approach** to addressing attendance concerns.

Stage 1: Monitoring

- Attendance is monitored by Teachers, Moltóirí and Caoimhnoirs

Stage 2: Caoimhnoir Contact

- Concerns are communicated to Parents/Guardians

Stage 3: Moltoir/Parent Meeting

- A formal meeting may be arranged to discuss concerns

Stage 4: Support Structures

Supports may include:

- Guidance Counsellor
- Pastoral Care supports
- External agencies where appropriate

Stage 5: Tusla Referral

- Students who reach **20 days absence** are referred to Tusla
- Referrals may also be made where serious concerns arise

Interventions are recorded where appropriate and reviewed to monitor progress.

Tusla / Legal Requirements

Ratoath College complies with the requirements of the **Education (Welfare) Act 2000**.



- Students absent for **20 days or more** must be reported to Tusla
- The school may report concerns regarding attendance at any stage
- Accurate attendance records are maintained

Tusla may engage directly with families where attendance concerns arise.

Communication with Parents

Ratoath College is committed to maintaining a strong partnership with Parents/Guardians.

Communication may include:

- Compass notifications
- Phone calls
- Meetings
- Ongoing engagement with relevant staff

Parents/guardians are expected to engage with the school when contacted and to support efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance data is reviewed on an ongoing basis by school staff.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by:

- Senior Management
- Relevant attendance personnel
- The Board of Management