



Building Inspiring Caring

CIRCULAR 2017/18 TL045

To Parents/Guardians of all enrolled students  
Cc: Bursar

January 2018

### **Attendance**

Good attendance at school is well recognised to be a major contributory factor towards students attaining good grades not just at GCSE but also at Key Stage 3. Attendance as a whole school this year is significantly down on previous years. I believe this is in many cases due to confusion around various weather warnings that have been issued at different times this year.

To date school has been closed for 3 days as a result of weather disruption and whilst attendance is not affected by this, as students do not lose their present mark, it is days either side of this that are being lost. Guidance published by Department of Education sets 95% attendance as the benchmark for satisfactory attendance and there are a significant number of students that are falling below this. 95% attendance equates to 9 days absence per academic year.

We take this matter very seriously and Mrs Burch in the school office makes phone calls on a daily basis when students are absent. In order that attendance improves we would ask that where possible you ensure that your child is at school and that students only miss school when there is a legitimate reason either through illness or other exceptional circumstances. Attendance at school is very important in your child achieving the best results possible and attendance that drops below this 95% figure will have a detrimental effect on this. Part of our role as a post primary school is to prepare students for the world of work after education. Whilst this may seem a long way away, for some of our senior students this is not such a distant possibility. There is strong evidence to show that reinforcing good attendance at school is a quality that follows students into their careers and we would like to make sure this is developed among students at Blackwater IC.

There are meetings planned this week to meet with some students and parents to improve attendance. Working alongside parents / guardians we can address these issues and make significant improvements without involving outside agencies such as Education Welfare. Responsibility however does lie with both the College and parents to ensure that attendance remains as high as possible and that regardless of any weather disruptions that students are in attendance and learning is not affected.

Stephen Taylor  
Principal