BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Committed to quality education

Important Attendance Information for Parents/Guardians

- ❖ School attendance is recorded using VSware and our school app.
- ❖ Attendance notes are compulsory for all absences, late arrivals and leaving the school early.
- ❖ Please note that all parents/guardians must download our school app as all attendance notes (absence notes, late notes, leaving school early notes) are submitted online using the school app.
- ❖ **Absence notes, late notes and leaving school early notes must be submitted and visible on our school system prior to your son/daughter signing in or signing out.**
- ❖ Notifications will be sent to your school app regarding your son/daughter's attendance so please ensure that your notifications for the school app are switched on.
- ❖ Please note that you can access and view your son/daughter's attendance record on VSware.

Setting Up Your Account on the School App:

- ❖ The school will send a text message to the phone number that you supplied to the school and this message will contain your username for the school app. (Please ensure that the phone number that you supplied to the school is correct and if that number ever changes then please let us know ASAP.)
- ❖ Download the school app by clicking on the links available on our school website, www.blackwatercs.com
- ❖ Follow the steps to log-in. You will be sent an original 8-digit code to log-in for the first time but please then create your own new password.
- ❖ A video link will be posted on the school app during the first few weeks to show you how to complete and submit attendance notes on the school app.

Absenteeism

- ❖ We encourage all parents/guardians to ensure that students achieve and maintain a very good attendance record in order to provide them with the best possibility of a successful teaching and learning experience.
- ❖ If your son/daughter is absent, then an absence note with an explanation must be submitted ASAP using the school app.
- ❖ Please submit an absence note for each absence. A long-term absence can be entered using a single absence note by filling in the date range correctly. Please do not include the date that your son/daughter is returning to school on the absence note. For example, if your son/daughter will be absent for just one single day then the date range will begin and finish on the same day.
- ❖ A notification will be sent to your school app if your son/daughter is absent without a note. This notification will continue to be sent until a note has been submitted.
- ❖ Any mistakes in absence notes can be corrected by resubmitting a new note online.

- ❖ **PLEASE NOTE:** We are obliged to report all students who are absent for 20+ days in a school year to the Educational Welfare Officer via the Tusla Returns. Therefore, it is important to ensure that notes are submitted in a timely fashion so that school absences can be recorded as explained rather than unexplained.
- ❖ If your son/daughter is absent for 10+ days, you will be contacted by the school to ensure that you are aware of this and that notes have been submitted to explain these absences.
- ❖ If your son/daughter is absent for 20+ days, you will receive a letter from the school to inform you that your son/daughter's name will be included in the mandatory Tusla Returns as mentioned above.

Lateness

- ❖ Tutor roll is taken and recorded at 08:40 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Every student must attend their tutor meeting on these mornings. Classes then begin at 08:45.
- ❖ If your son/daughter has missed tutor meeting then he/she is considered late and must sign in at the office before attending class.
- ❖ There is no tutor meeting on Wednesday mornings. Instead, students go straight to their first class which begins at 08:35 and their class teacher records the morning roll. If the student is late for this class, then he/she will be asked to go and sign in at the office before being permitted to attend class.
- ❖ A notification will be sent to your school app if your son/daughter is registered as being late to school without a note. Please only submit a note for lateness if there is a valid reason.
- ❖ L1 = Explained lateness. When a late note is submitted online by a parent/guardian, lateness is recorded as either AbE (explained absence) or L1 (explained lateness) on your son/daughter's attendance record and no further action is needed.
- ❖ L2 = Unexplained lateness. When a late note is not submitted by a parent/guardian, lateness is recorded as either Abs (absent) or L2 (unexplained lateness) on your son/daughter's attendance and discipline record. An accumulation of 3 L2's = after-school detention.

Attendance Procedures

If your son/daughter is signing in late:

i. Parent/Guardian submits a late note on the school app prior to the student entering the school and gives a reason for the lateness. A late note must still be submitted even if a parent/guardian presents themselves at the school office with their son/daughter.

ii. Student enters the school via the main door and goes to the school office.

iii. Student signs in digitally on the attendance tablet by clicking on the 'LATE' section. (An attendance logbook will be present if the tablet isn't available.)

iv. Student goes straight to class.

Please note that, as mentioned above, if no late note is submitted online then an L2 will be entered on your son/daughter's attendance and discipline record (L2 = late without a valid explanation.) A student who receives 3 L2's will get after-school detention.

If your son/daughter needs to sign out to leave school:

==**For reasons of health and safety and child protection, a parent/guardian must be present at the school office when a student is signing out. A phone call from a parent/guardian is not sufficient. A student will not be permitted to leave the school unless a parent/guardian is present.**==

i. Parent/guardian submits a 'permission to leave early note' on the school app **prior to the student leaving the school** and gives a reason for the student leaving. This note must be submitted and visible on our system before the student leaves.
ii. Parent/Guardian presents themselves at the school office by the main door & signs the attendance logbook.
iii. Student signs out on the tablet by clicking on the 'PERMISSION TO LEAVE' section.

If your son/daughter is signing back into school after signing out:

i. Student re-enters the school via the main door at the school office.
ii. Student goes to the school office and signs in digitally on the tablet in the 'RETURNING TO SCHOOL' section.
iii. Student goes straight to class.

No 'late note' needs to be submitted to sign back in when returning to school after signing out as there should already be a 'permission to leave' note on the system explaining when and why he/she signed out earlier and what time he/she was expected to return.

If you are having difficulties logging in or accessing your account on the school app at any stage, please contact the school or Unique Publishing directly ASAP. Contact details for Unique Publishing can be found on their website www.uniquepublishing.ie