

Parent Information Sheet

'A Study Investigating the School Attendance Habits of Post-16 Pupils'

School attendance has been a key issue for the UK Government for many decades. The reasons why pupils do not attend school are particularly interesting for teachers and those working in schools. In Northern Ireland schools are constantly striving to improve and maintain the highest rates of attendance within their pupils to provide them with the best opportunities. Coleraine Grammar School's attendance rate is currently almost 96% which compares very favourably with similar schools.

Although Government agencies provide assistance to schools in addressing attendance issues, they only work with pupils in Years 8 – 12 and not those in Sixth Form who have chosen to return to school to complete further qualifications. Before schools can tackle the issue of attendance to benefit their own pupils, teachers need to be aware of the reasons why their pupils are not attending school.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the attendance habits of post-16 pupils and it is hoped the results can be used in future policies and practices at Coleraine Grammar School to support pupils in Sixth Form and further increase their attendance.

Year 13 pupils will be invited to take part in the research during registration on Wednesday 20th April. This will involve completing a short questionnaire which has two key objectives:

- To gain an insight into the attitudes of Post-16 pupils towards attendance
- To identify the main reasons why some pupils may choose not to attend school

As participation is voluntary, your child is free to withdraw from the study at any time up until the point that the data set is made anonymous, prior to any reports derived from the research being published. Any reports will not mention individual names or even the name of schools that participated in the research. The research has ethical approval from Queen's University Belfast School of Educational Ethics Committee.

Data will be stored securely and will be destroyed five years after the research has been completed. Although I am conducting the research, I will not be present when questionnaires are being completed.

As a new school, Coleraine Grammar School is working hard to create and implement strategies that will benefit staff and pupils and plans to revise its attendance policy in June 2016. It is hoped this research will provide valuable information to enable Pastoral Leaders to develop strategies which will support our pupils.

Your co-operation in permitting your child to take part in this study would be much appreciated. If you have any further questions regarding the study, or would prefer your child not to take part in the study, please contact me by Friday 15th April.

Miss Tilbury
MSc Educational Leadership student
School of Education
Queens University Belfast
ctilbury327@c2kni.net

