



<b>Catholic Education Policy</b>	Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting ACT & NSW Critical Incident Response Medical Welfare of Students Enrolment Policy Changing the Name of a Student Work Experience/Work Placement Record Keeping Confidentiality Privacy
----------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Related Policies</b>	<b>St Clare's College:</b> Pastoral Care and Wellbeing
-------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------

<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive
---------------------	-----------

<b>Implementation date:</b>	July 2011
-----------------------------	-----------

<b>Revision date:</b>	2021
-----------------------	------

<b>St Clare's Contact Officer</b>	Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Wellbeing
-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------

## Rationale/Purpose

---

Sets out the obligations and processes to record student school attendance, respond to attendance issues, consider exemptions or extended leave from school, and maintain appropriate records. It applies to all CECG schools in NSW and ACT.

This policy sets out the obligations and processes for managing student attendance and absences, including:

- Recording and encouraging attendance
- Exemptions and extended leave
- Responding to absenteeism.

## Policy

---

St Clare's College adheres to the Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn's Attendance Policy. This policy can be accessed via the following link:

<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/110/Attendance%20Policy.pdf>



St Clare's College adheres to the Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn's Behavioural Support Policy. This policy can be accessed via the following link:

<https://cg.catholic.edu.au/parents/policies/>

## Definitions

---

### **Chronic absenteeism**

Attendance for less than 80% of required days. Chronic absenteeism requires additional intervention to improve attendance and will require a mandatory report.

### **Compulsory school age/compulsory education age**

A child is of compulsory school age (NSW) or compulsory education age (ACT) from the age of six years old until they reach 17 years old, or complete year 12.

### **Emerging absenteeism**

Attendance less than 90% of required days. Emerging absenteeism requires a response and support to improve attendance.

### **Exemption from Attendance**

Approved absence over 25 school days (including 25 part-days) in 12 months for:

- Exceptional circumstances, including health considerations where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate.
- Short-term employment opportunities after which the student will return to school.
- Participation in elite arts or sporting events (e.g. at State, National or International level)
- The child is prevented from attending school under a direction of the Public Health Act 2010 (and sick leave would not be more appropriate).

Exemption from Enrolment temporary exemption over 25 days from the legal requirement to be enrolled in school, available for:

- Age: where a child turns six years on or after 1 October and the Principal is satisfied it is not in the student's interest to enrol in the year they turn six years old,
- Health or disability of a child that requires them to continue in an individual program supported by medical specialists not longer than six months after the child's sixth birthday,

or

- Participation in approved alternate education or training before a student completes Year 10 (e.g. TAFE/CIT or other registered RTO or traineeship / apprenticeship).

### **Extended leave**

Approved absence over 25 days (including 25 part-days) in twelve months for:



- family travel domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals and bereavement leave
- attendance at recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions
- participation in special events not related to the school

## Procedures

---

### **Keeping of registers and records of enrolments and attendances**

- The Act provides for the keeping of registers and records of enrolment in schools and attendance at school in sections 99 and 100. Section 100 (1) (b) of the Act requires that a record of the attendance or non-attendance of a student must be kept for every day when the school is open for attendance.
- Attendance records must clearly show whether the child was present and if not, the reason for the absence in all cases.

### **Entering of data in registers of enrolment and records of attendance**

- Enrolment information should be entered directly onto the System's record keeping system by the school. The Catholic Education Office has access to each school's data.
- A central register of enrolment and attendance is kept by the Directorate
- The College will use an electronic roll keeping system to enter and store attendance data. Daily attendance data will be uploaded from the attendance package into the school's administration database. Each day new student data will be uploaded into the attendance package.
- In order to maintain accurate records and monitor the daily attendance of students' staff are obliged to follow the school processes regarding student absence, lateness, leave and roll marking. These processes are outlined on the SEQTA homepage – Marking attendance in SEQTA.

### **In the event of a student absence:**

- Written documentation (from parent or carer) explaining the reason for the absence must be submitted to the Student Administration Officer on the day the student returns to school. It is the responsibility of the student to submit all permission and absence notes directly to Student Administration.
- If a student is to be absent for longer than one week parents are expected to contact the Principal in advance either by email or letter. The Principal's EA will then advise the appropriate College personnel including the Student Administration Officer and the student's teachers.
- If the school has not received a text of a student absence prior to the day on which they are absent a text message is sent to the parent or guardian's nominated mobile telephone.

### **If a student arrives late she is to:**

- Sign into the attendance system at Student Administration.
- If the student has a note to explain the absence she will then immediately pass the note to the Student Administration Officer.



### **Keeping of attendance records**

- To ensure consistency in the keeping of attendance records, the school must employ the codes outlined by the Catholic Education Office when recording absences and the reason for absences
- The hours of attendance at St Clare's College are 8:55 am to 3:25 pm. Supervision is provided from 8:30 am to 3:50 pm each day.
- Attendance records provided by a class teacher must be marked for each timetabled class or activity.
- When a child is on a graduated return to school (after an absence due to illness or for other reasons), she must be marked present for the time spent at school and absent with parental approval for the time not at school
- The status of the child as a child on graduated return must be recorded on the child's file held by the school.

### **Keeping of Attendance records for Senior Students**

- It is a requirement of the College and the BSSS that all senior students are present for all scheduled lessons.
- It is a requirement of the College that senior students are present each day for their Pastoral Care lesson at 11.01am.
- Senior students may leave College grounds provided that they do not have any scheduled lessons, have signed out and have their parent's written permission to do so.
- Parents are requested to make appointments outside of school time, (for example driving lessons, physiotherapy appointments) and avoid scheduling family holidays or the like during term time.
- Leave for holidays will not normally be approved. Absences for appointments such as driving lessons will not be approved by the College.
- As soon as possible after returning to school after an absence, senior students must submit a note from parents/carers at Student Administration explaining the absence. The note must include the date of the absence/s, show due cause and have submitted with it any other relevant documentary evidence for non-attendance, for example, medical certificates etc.
- Absences beyond this time will be considered 'Unapproved'. As per BSSS policy, students who accrue more than 10% of unapproved absences will void the unit of study in which the absences have occurred.
- If a student misses an assessment item due to illness, a doctor's certificate will be required. Upon return to school, it is the student's responsibility to see her teacher about the missed item, and it will be normal practice to request that the student complete an equivalent or alternate piece of assessment.
- It is important to note that more than nine 'Unapproved' absences can lead to the student receiving a V (or Void) grade for the Semester Unit. This has serious implications for the award of the Year 12 Certificate as well as for the completion of requirements for university entry for T



students. If a student misses an assessment item and due cause with adequate documentary evidence is not supplied or the absence is not approved, the student will receive a notional zero for the assessment item.

### **Management of records**

- Principals have a responsibility to ensure that records of all enrolments and attendance are made in accordance with Division 2 of the Territory Records Act 2002 which outlines agency responsibilities in relation to record management by making and keeping records and ensuring accessibility of information
- All records pertaining to enrolment and attendance must be available for inspection by an authorised person, on production of an authorised person's card. This is a legal requirement under Section 101 (1) of the Education Act 2004. The Principal must comply with such a request as failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine. Other action may also be taken e.g. disciplinary action
- Section 101 (2) of the Act states that the Chief Executive of the Directorate or an authorised person may request access to stated information about enrolments or attendances of children at the school or course during a stated period of time. Principals must comply with such a request as failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine
- Section 101 (3) of the Act states that an authorised person may make copies of the register of enrolments and attendances or any part of that register
- Principals are required, under Section 101 (4) of the Act, to take reasonable steps to assist the authorised person exercising his/her functions in regard to the inspection of registers of enrolment and attendance. Failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine

### **Compulsory attendance of school age children**

- Under Section 11 of the Act, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that a child who lives in the ACT, is of compulsory school age and is enrolled at a school attends:
  - The school on every day, and during the times on every day, when school is open for attendance
  - Every activity of the school (including attendances at an approved educational course) that the school requires the child to attend
- Parents must have a reasonable excuse for not complying with the compulsory attendance requirements in the Act
- If parents do not have a reasonable excuse they are liable under the Act and may be fined. This is a strict liability offence
- Examples of a 'reasonable excuse' for a child's absence might include:
  - Illness, including recovery from major illness, injury or medical condition
  - Medical or dental treatment



- Bereavement
- Religious or cultural observation
- Family holidays or extended visits overseas
- Attendance at a wedding
- Attendance at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with hearings
- Participation in sanctioned debates, eisteddfods, sports, musical or theatrical productions
- not directly arranged by the school
- Participation in territory, interstate, national or international sporting event or equivalent.

#### **Sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families**

- Section 12 of the Act applies where the Chief Executive of the Directorate believes on reasonable grounds that:
  - A child of compulsory school age lives in the ACT
  - The child is not enrolled at a school or registered for home education.
- Section 12 (2) of the Act states that the Chief Executive of the Directorate may give written notice to a parent of the child requiring the parent to give the Chief Executive of the Directorate the details about the child stated in the notice within 7 days after the day the parent receives the notice.
- If the Chief Executive of the Directorate gives notice to the parent, the parent must comply with the notice. Failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine.
- If a young person wishes to engage in a training or employment alternative they must have an Approval Statement from the Directorate to do so. This does not apply to education options including study or vocational training at a registered training organisation, university or higher education provider. Application packs and further information about the application process are available from the Directorate website: <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>. This does not include casual work undertaken by young people in addition to their education.
- An exemption certificate may be sought when it is not appropriate to require a child or young person to be enrolled or registered, or to meet the full-time participation requirements of the Act.

Examples of this include:

- An exemption from the full-time participation requirement due to health reasons
- Undertaking an apprenticeship/traineeship
- Part-time training/part-time work



- Part-time education/part-time work
- Full-time employment/graduated return to work

The Chief Executive has the authority to issue an exemption certificate. Applications and further information about the application process are available from the Directorate website:

<http://www.det.act.gov.au/>.

### **Encouraging school attendance**

- All strategies used to encourage school attendance should be documented and recorded on the school student database.
- When a student has been absent for three or more days without contact having been made with the school, the Pastoral Class Leader will phone the parents to ascertain the reason for the absence and offer pastoral care as appropriate to the circumstances
- Where the reason for absence is not satisfactory or the student is reluctant to return to school the Pastoral Class teacher will attempt to encourage a return to school.
- Where the approach by the Pastoral Class Leader is unsuccessful or a pattern of irregular attendance develops the matter should be referred to the Pastoral Coordinator who will make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.
- Where the approach by the Pastoral Coordinator is unsuccessful or a pattern of irregular attendance develops the matter should be referred to the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care and Wellbeing who will make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.
- Depending upon the outcome of the meeting the school may seek the assistance of the School Counsellor or Parish Priest to assist the child/parents with a return to school.
- Other strategies as appropriate to the circumstances and within the resources of the school will be explored. These may include:
  - A graduated return
  - adjustment to class groupings or timetable
  - enlistment of the support of the School Support Team
  - Peer Tutoring support
  - meeting with the School Counsellors
  - enlistment of the support of the Indigenous Education Assistant (CE)
  - liaison with external medical, counselling or community support services
- Where the approach/es by the Assistant Principal is/are unsuccessful the matter should be referred to the Principal who should make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.



- The Principal should ensure the parents are aware of their obligations under the Act and make contact with external agencies that may be able to assist. Depending upon the circumstances these agencies may include:

<b>Name of Agency</b>	<b>Contact phone number</b>
Catholic Care – School Counselling	Internal Extension 425 and 444
Parish Priest	As applicable
Family GP	As applicable
CAMHS	6205 1971
FACES – Family and Adolescent Centre	6162 6100
Child and Youth Protection Services	133427 (general enquiry) 1300 556 728 (mandated persons line)

- In the event that all possible avenues available to the school to encourage attendance have been exhausted without success, the Principal will make contact with the relevant Catholic Education Office School Services Officer for advice about arranging a meeting with an authorised non-government person.

## References

---

Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2008-19/current/pdf/2008-19.pdf>

ACT Education Act 2004

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2004-17/current/pdf/2004-17.pdf>

Territory Records Act 2002

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2002-18/current/pdf/2002-18.pdf>

Education Options (other than school)

[http://www.det.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf)

Post Year 10 Alternatives

[http://www.det.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf)

Education Participation Requirements

[http://www.det.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf)

Non-Government School Attendance

[http://www.det.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf)





## Forms

---

### Related CECG Documents:

- Application for Exemption from Attendance or Enrolment ACT  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/122/Application%20for%20Exemption%20from%20Attendance%20or%20Enrolment%20ACT.docx>
- Attendance Letter 1 - Attendance Concern  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/111/L1%20Attendance%20Letter%20-%20Attendance%20concern.docx>
- Attendance Letter 2 – Attendance Planning Meeting request  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/112/L2%20Attendance%20Letter%20-%20Attendance%20Planning%20Meeting%20request.docx>
- Attendance Letter 3 – School advises CEO for Referral Attendance Support  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/113/L3%20Attendance%20Letter%20-%20School%20advises%20CEO%20Referral%20Attendance%20Support.docx>
- Attendance Letter 4a – School Advises Referral for Attendance Conference  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/114/L4a%20Attendance%20Letter%20-%20School%20Advises%20Referral%20Attendance%20Conference.docx>
- Response to Absenteeism Flowchart  
<https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/formandpolicies/PolicyLibrary/Lists/PolicyList/Attachments/119/Response%20to%20absenteeism%20flow%20chart.pdf>