



For the Whole of Their Life

St. Philip's Christian College Gosford

5.1.1 Student Attendance Policy 2019

Document Information	
Compliance	
Board of Studies	Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual Section 3.8 (Attendance) Section 3.6.1 (Child Protection) Section 3.6.2 (Safe and Supportive Environment) Section 3.10.1 (Reporting on changes made to policies) NSW Attendance Register Codes www.aisnsw.edu.au/Services/GovtRegs/Attendance/Documents/ ...
Legislative Requirements	NSW Education Act (1990) www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protections Act 1998) Sect 23 www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/carpapa1998442/s23.html The Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community) Act 1998 http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/sessionalview/sessional/act/1998-148.pdf National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (Commonwealth Government DEEWR) – (<i>International Centralised Administration Manual (CAM) Version July 2011.</i>) CCH School Principal's Legal Guide www.cch.com.au
Other Policy Relationships	Child Protection Supervision of Students K-12 Excursions Errands Enrolment of International Students Roll Marking Procedures Procedures for Exemption from Being Enrolled and Attending School
Key Dates:	
Review Date	September 2022
Policy Review	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or as needed in line with legislative changes and the requirements of the Association of Independent Schools
Applies to	St Philip's Christian College, Gosford K-12

The College's policies, which are made from time to time, are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the Education Act and of the Board of Studies for registration of the school. Any policy developed corporately by SPCEF Ltd. overrides any local policy developed by SPCC Gosford.

1 General Statement

The College is committed to the academic success of all students and to the belief that all students can learn. We believe that daily school attendance contributes to students' academic success and helps them develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility.

The law in NSW states that all children between the ages of six and below the minimum leaving age¹ are required to attend school regularly (Education Act 1990).

Parents/Care givers are legally responsible for their child's attendance.

The College is responsible for maintaining and monitoring the Attendance Register.

2 Aim

This policy sets out the requirements for the attendance of students at St Philip's Christian College, Gosford.

3. Objectives - Policy statement

Objectives - Policy statement

3.1 The NSW Education Act, Section 22 (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school-age * to cause the child:

- (a) to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or
- (b) to be registered for home schooling with the Board of Studies and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.

3.2 All students who are enrolled at St Philip's Christian College, regardless of their age, are expected to attend the College whenever instruction is provided.

3.3 Section 24 of the Education Act requires the College to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Accurate attendance registers must be available for inspection during school hours by any authorised person. (see Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual, Section 3.8 (Attendance), pg 36, 37 for requirements of register). This register is to be retained for seven years after the last entry was made.

4. Audience and Applicability

All students, staff and parents of St Philip's Christian College, Gosford.

5. Context

5.1 Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their learning. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to make sure that their child attends school every day. The College along with parents, is to encourage regular attendance of students.

5.2 The school attendance register should be completed daily and must be accurate and reflect the highest professional standards.

5.3 From 2012 the common code approved by the NSW Minister for Education will be used by the College for all attendance registers. These attendance codes were revised in 2015 (see appendix 2 and 3).

5.4 In 2010 the NSW Minister for Education, under section 25 of the *Education Act 1990* delegated the power to the principal of a non-government school to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

¹ See Compulsory School Age, NSW Education Act (1990) Section 21B
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/s21b.html

6. Responsibilities and delegations

6.1 Principal

- 6.1.1 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.1.2 Ensure that the College maintains accurate records of daily attendance and absences of students and that these are appropriately retained for seven years after the last entry was made.
- 6.1.3 Ensure that copies of the information in the register of enrolments and register of daily attendance are backed up at regular intervals.
- 6.1.3 Inform staff of attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school
- 6.1.4 Have the authority to grant:
 - an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student
 - exemptions under Section 25(1) of the Education Act (1990) from being enrolled and attending school for an indefinite period for students who have completed Year 9 of secondary education and who have been approved to undertake a full-time apprenticeship or traineeship.
- 6.1.5 Maintain records of any exemptions under Section 25 including certificates and other relevant documentation.
- 6.1.6 Refer students who require exemptions greater than 100 days in one school year to the Minister for Education's delegate at the Student Welfare Directorate, NSW Department of Education and Communities Welfare.
- 6.1.7 Refer to Community Services if there is a concern that a student maybe educationally neglected due to habitual absent.
- 6.1.8 Notify the DET Home School Liaison officer if the whereabouts of a student under 17 years of age is unknown, their last known name, age and address.
- 6.1.9 Ensure that all records and procedures pertaining to International Students are accurately maintained and followed. (see Appendix I)
- 6.1.10 Appoint and continue to train a specially designated role (Student Reception staff) to implement and monitor Attendance policies and roll marking procedures

6.2 Heads of School

- 6.2.1 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.2.2 Ensure their sub-school maintains accurate and approved attendance records of student attendance.
- 6.2.3 Inform staff of attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.
- 6.2.4 Encourage students to regularly attend school.
- 6.2.5 Follow up on frequent unexplained absences, lateness, illness, when informed by teaching/administrative staff and transfer information to student files if necessary.
- 6.2.6 Inform the Principal if a student's absence is chronic (30 days out of 100) and
 - Organise an attendance meeting with Principal, parents and AIS consultant if required.
 - Establish Attendance plan or Health Plan if poor attendance is due to ill health.
 - Liaise with AIS School Liaison Officer
 - If attendance continues to be poor, inform the DET Home School Liaison Officer and report situation to Community Services

6.3 Teachers

- 6.3.1 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.3.2 Encourage students to regularly attend school.
- 6.3.3 Maintain an accurate daily attendance register/roll.
- 6.3.4 Mark class roll at commencement of each lesson and contact Head of School if a student is absent from class for an unexplained or extended period of time.

6.4 Student Reception

- 6.4.1 Maintain accurate daily attendance registers, noting absences, reason for absence and any documentation pertaining to this.
- 6.4.2 Follow up all unexplained absences on a daily basis. If after seven (7) days no satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming from the parents/carers the absence is recorded as "Unexplained".
- 6.4.3 Complete all administrative tasks required for attendance registers.
- 6.4.4 Inform Head of School of frequent lateness and unexplained absences or if problems with roll marking.

6.5 Parent/Carers

- 6.5.1 Parents of children of compulsory school age are legally responsible for their enrolment and regular attendance at school.
- 6.5.2 Parent/Carers are responsible for assisting, transporting and encouraging their enrolled child/children to be punctual, attend daily and participate in regular class instruction or the like, at St Philip's Christian College whenever it is offered.
- 6.5.3 Parents/carers are to take effective measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children
- 6.5.4 Parents are to ensure that their children are in a fit state to attend class.
- 6.5.5 When seeking an exemption from enrolment or attendance, parents are required to submit an application (on the appropriate form) and any relevant supporting material at least two weeks prior to the required dates.
- 6.5.5 Parents are required to explain all absences of their children from school promptly and within seven (7) school days to the school.
- 6.5.6 Parents are to inform the Principal of periods of children's absence greater than one school week.
- 6.5.7 If a student has been absent for a period of 10 continuous school days and no communication has been forthcoming from the parent/carer then the enrolment of the child may be terminated and the matter referred to the home/school liaison officer.

6.6 Students

- 6.6.1 To regularly attend school and participate in all classes/excursions/activities as directed by the College.
- 6.6.2 Be punctual to all classes and activities.
- 6.6.3 Senior students are required to make alternative arrangements with staff regarding BoS assessment tasks if absenteeism prevents them from completing set tasks on time.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed every three years or as needed in line with legislative changes.

Additional Materials

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College Enrolment Policy and Special Enrolment procedures for students with unique circumstances and the Procedures for Roll Marking.

NSW Education Act (1990)

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/

Appendix I

Compulsory School Age

Section 21B of the NSW Education Act (1990)

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/s21b.html

Compulsory school-age

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a child is of [compulsory school-age](#) if the child is of or above the age of 6 years and below the minimum [school](#) leaving age.

(2) The minimum [school](#) leaving age is:

(a) the age at which the child completes Year 10 of secondary education (subject to participation required by subsection (3)), or

(b) the age of 17 years,

whichever first occurs.

(3) A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education but who is below the age of 17 years is of [compulsory school-age](#) unless the child participates on a full-time basis in:

(a) approved education or training, or

(b) if the child is of or above the age of 15 years-paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work.

(4) A child ceasing to be of [compulsory school-age](#) because of that participation does not revert to being of [compulsory school-age](#) because of a cessation in participation for any reason so long as the interruption in participation does not exceed a total period of 3 months in any 12-month period or such other period approved by the Minister.

(5) The completion of Year 10 of secondary education is:

(a) the completion of Year 10 of secondary education in this State (whether by [school](#) education or [home schooling](#)), or

(b) the completion of a course provided by the TAFE Commission that is approved by the Minister as the equivalent of Year 10 of secondary education in this State, or

(c) the completion, outside of this State, of the equivalent of Year 10 of secondary education in this State, or

(d) the completion of education in any special circumstances approved by the Minister.

(6) Participation in approved education or training is participation in any of the following:

(a) a higher education course within the meaning of the [Higher Education Act 2001](#) ,

(b) a vocational course within the meaning of the [Vocational Education and Training Act 2005](#) ,

(c) an apprenticeship or traineeship within the meaning of the [Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001](#)

(d) any other education or training approved by the Minister.

(7) The regulations may prescribe rules and criteria that are to be applied for the purposes of this section in determining:

(a) whether a child has completed Year 10, or

(b) whether a child is participating in paid work, or

(c) whether a child is participating in approved education or training, or

(d) whether such participation is on a full-time basis.

Subject to the regulations, participation on a full-time basis in paid work is participation for an average of 25 hours per week

Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual

Section 3.8 Attendance

A registered non-government school must keep a register of enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school.

The Act requires that the principal of a registered non-government school keep a register of enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school. The register of enrolments and/or the register of daily attendances may be maintained in print or electronic form.

Copies of the information in the register of enrolment and the register of daily attendance should be stored off-site at regular intervals.

Evidence of compliance

A registered non-government school must:

- maintain a register of enrolments that includes the following information for each student
 - name, age and address
 - the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
 - date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
 - for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
 - where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that a Department of Education and Training officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known occupational health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student

- have in place policies and procedures to
 - monitor the daily attendance/absence of students
 - identify absences from school and/or class(es)
 - follow up unexplained absences
 - notify parent(s) and/or guardian(s) regarding poor school and/or class attendance
 - transfer unsatisfactory attendance information to student files

- maintain a register of daily attendance that includes the following information for each student
 - daily attendance, which may be recorded by noting daily absences
 - absences
 - reason for absence
 - documentation to substantiate reason for absence.

The register of enrolments must be retained for a minimum period of five (5) years before archiving. The register of daily attendances must be retained for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made.

Appendix 2

2018 Attendance Register Codes

Definitions

Only the following attendance register codes **must** be used to record the:

- explanation of student absence, and/or
- variation in student attendance.

Attendance Register Codes	
Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence	
Symbol	Meaning
A	<p>The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal</p> <p>It is at the Principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.</p>
S	<p>The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a medical certificate is provided or- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.
L	<p>An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- misadventure or unforeseen event- participation in special events not related to the school- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member- attendance at funerals- travel in Australia and overseas- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
E	<p>The student was suspended from school</p>

Attendance Register Codes Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance (not counted as an absence for statistical purposes)	
Symbol	Meaning
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

1. Note: In most cases this code will only be used by Department of Education and Communities schools, with the exception of students from non-government schools attending hospital schools.

2. Note: For Independent Schools use "F" not "H" for students attending external tutorial centres and programs that are school authorised.

Recording the duration of an absence or variation in attendance

In addition to recording the reason for an absence or the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the absence or variation must be recorded.

Manual Attendance Registers

Department of Education and Communities schools that maintain manual attendance registers and do not use electronic means for maintaining student attendance must use the following symbols with the appropriate attendance register code for recording the reason for absence or a variation in attendance:

a - The student was absent on that day.

Pa - The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

Note: The symbol 'X' is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each Term.

Appendix 3

School Attendance Register Codes – Changes to Codes Commencing

<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/Services/GovtRegs/Attendance/Documents/Changes%20to%20NSW%20Attendance%20Codes%20from%202015.pdf>

Changes from 2015

The Minister for Education has approved changes to the use of the Attendance Register codes for 2015.

The changes implement the *ACARA National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting*. ACARA developed the National Standards to establish nationally consistent parameters for the collection and reporting of student attendance data.

Holidays

As part of the implementation of the National Standards, holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods will now be **included** as absences. **A Certificate of Exemption can no longer be granted for this purpose.**

Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. If travel during school term is necessary the following considerations apply:

- If the principal **accepts** the reason for the absence, the absence will be marked as “**L**”
- If the principal does not believe the absence is in the student’s best interests and does not accept the reason, the absence is unjustified and will be recorded as “**A**”
- If the period of absence is in excess of 50 days, the student may be eligible to enrol in Distance Education.

For that period the student’s enrolment transfers to the distance education school.

Note: A student cannot be enrolled in more than one school concurrently (including Distance Education)

Leave

The revised use of the “**L**” code relating to holidays means the 15 day limit on its use has been removed.

Schools can request the completion of an Application for Leave Form for holidays within the school term. DEC is developing templates for an application for leave and a certificate of extended leave. Once approved, AIS will make these templates available for use by schools.

Principals should consider the conditions/consequences applicable to the acceptance of an Application for Leave.

Other codes

The recent changes to the Attendance Register Codes include the redefinition of some codes:

- The “**F**” code is no longer only for senior students participating in a flexible timetable. The code now includes students participating in programs and assessments such as: HSC Pathways Programs, Kindergarten entry assessments (e.g. Best Start), trial or HSC exams or VET courses.
- The “**B**” code includes student exchange and allows for some additional flexibility around its use.
- The “**H**” code is used when a student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to attend an

alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis.

Accepting explanations

- The **“A”** code is to be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal. It is at the principal’s discretion to accept or reject the explanation provided.
- If a student’s absence is due to sickness the **“S”** code is used. The principal may request a medical certificate in addition to an explanation if the explanation is doubted or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.

Record keeping

Schools need to ensure they have policy and procedures to monitor regular attendance and to ensure that records are current, accurate and accessible. The procedures should reflect how attendance is marked, followed up and records maintained at that particular school. NESAs requires that student records should be kept for six years after the student has turned 18 years of age.