

ST COLUMBA'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Other Related Documents:

- Assessment and Reporting Handbook Stage 5 & 6 – St Columba's
- St Columba's Staff Handbook
- The Education Act – NSW Government
- Welfare of Students in Catholic Systemic Colleges Policy – CEO Parramatta

CONTACT PERSON

Principal	- Mr Paul Ryan
Assistant Principals	- Mr Ross Gawthorne / Miss Carol Muscat

DATE OF PUBLICATION	STATUS	DATE TO BE REVIEWED
February 2005	Working Document	October 2018
LAST REVIEWED		
December 2017		

Rationale:

The Education Act requires that children of school age (six - seventeen years) are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless formally exempt. Our College requires that post-compulsory aged students also attend College unless a valid reason exists.

Regular attendance at College is essential if students are to maximise their potential. While parents are legally responsible for promoting regular attendance for their children, College staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor absences.

Aims:

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend College do so regularly, and without unnecessary absences.

Implementation:

- Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult.
- Absenteeism contributes significantly to students experiencing difficulties at College.
- All enrolled students are required to attend College unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Parents/Carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend College regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary. Parents / Carers have a further responsibility to provide a written note to the College explaining why an absence has occurred.
- Parents/Carers of students who are to be absent are required to report the absence. The absence is then to be confirmed in writing by a note from parents/carers.
- Independent students not living with parents or carers are also required to provide notes.
- Inadequately explained absences will cause the Homeroom Teacher to communicate with parents/carers and the student involved so as to implement strategies that will resolve the problem.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues of post-compulsory students may result in their withdrawal from College.
- The Principal will ensure all student absences are recorded each period by teachers, are aggregated on our database and communicated to the CEDP
- The Department of Education, CEDP and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- Student absence figures will appear on student Semester 1 and Semester 2 reports.

Responsibilities

The College staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:

- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of well-being and belonging to the College community.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

1.0 Procedures

For Staff

- Homeroom Teachers will mark the roll electronically during the Homeroom period.
- A hard copy of the electronic record is to be generated fortnightly and provided to the Principal and Head of Mission.
- Notifications to parents regarding overdue explanations of absences are issued weekly.
- All teachers are to mark a class roll at the beginning of each lesson. If a student is absent but Iris indicates they should be present, the class teacher is to notify the Student Office immediately. Matters of truancy must be reported to the Faculty Leader of Learning. When truancy involves more than one missed class in one day, the student is referred to the Leader of Mission.
- The Homeroom Teacher and Leader of Mission should look for patterns of absenteeism and truancy and implement procedures to address the issue.
- The Homeroom Teacher must sign, initial and file notes which explain students' absences and file them in the designated student folder.
- When a student reports to the Clinic, the Clinic staff will contact parents or caregivers. The Staff will electronically record the time in the clinic and if necessary, make an entry indicating a partial absence.
- If a pattern of late arrival to College develops, it is the responsibility of the Homeroom Teacher to make contact with the parent/caregiver. If a poor punctuality or attendance pattern continues, the Homeroom Teacher will refer the student to the Leader of Mission who will conduct an interview with the student and parent in an attempt to rectify the situation.

For Students

- Students must be in attendance between 8.53am and 3.05pm (students attending TAFE and Year 12 students timetabled for study in period 6 are exempted. This does not apply to Year 11, Term 4).
- Students arriving after the roll marking announcement must report to Student Services where the lateness will be recorded. If a student is not signed in by a parent, they are to have the late slip signed by a parent or caregiver and return it to their Homeroom Teacher.
- When a student arrives after the roll call period, they are to present the late slip to the class teacher who will sign it. The student must return the slip to Student Services.
- Students who need to leave the College premises before the end of the College day must present a note signed by the students' parent or caregiver. The note must indicate the time and reason for early departure. The note must be confirmed and signed by the Leader of Mission.
- Students leaving the College premises must sign out at Student Services.
- Students who need to leave College due to illness are to report to the College Clinic. A student will be signed out from the Clinic when collected by a parent or caregiver.
- All absences (partial and full) must be explained in writing (letter or email) within 7 days (in special circumstances this can be done via a phone call).

NSW ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES

(for implementation in all NSW Colleges from January 2012)

Note: The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.	
Symbols to be used where students are absent from College	
Symbol	Meaning
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.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence	
Note: The following symbols should be recorded above the a or Pa symbol as appropriate.	
Symbol	Meaning
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.
B	The student is absent from the College on official College business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the College site to undertake: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - College sport (regional and state carnivals) - College excursions.
E	The student was suspended from College.
F	Year 11 or 12 student participating in flexible timetable not present because they are not required to be at College. Or Student who has completed Year 10 but is below the age of 17 years participating in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approved education or training, or - 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.
H	The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis in line with Diocesan Policy. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream College, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour Colleges - juvenile justice - hospital Colleges.
L	Principals may record up to 15 days in a College year for students of compulsory College age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory College age may be recorded at the principal's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the College - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
M	The student was exempted from attending College. (See <i>Guidelines for Exemption from Attendance at NSW Catholic Systemic Colleges</i>)
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical appointment. In these cases: <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 duration of the absence is more than four days.

Critical Care Students – Absence Procedure

Absence with Parent Consent

- If a critical care student is absent, parents have been asked to inform the school prior to 8.45am
- Student Services will notify Leader of Mission and Homeroom Teachers via email re absence, following parent notification.

Absence without Parent Consent

- If a critical care student is not present in Homeroom, and no parent notification has been received, Homeroom teacher to notify Leader of Mission immediately. Leader of Mission to advise Principal and Head of Mission of possible Critical Care Incident. (Do not use email or leave messages. Notification must be direct to the person).
- Leader of Mission to attempt to verify if student was seen on bus or in yard. If student has not been seen on property, Leader of Mission to ring parent to notify of absence. Parent asked to attempt to contact student via mobile and to inform school if he/she is located. Leader of Mission to notify Principal and Head of Mission.

When any student is absent from class

- If student is not present in class: Classroom teacher to check iris daily attendance. If student should be present but is not, classroom teacher to notify Student Services immediately by sending a responsible student from class. No emails.
- Student Services to notify Principal, Leader of Mission, Head of Mission, Student Counsellor and Assistant Principal via the runner or direct phone call. Assistant Principal will co-ordinate immediate search of school.
- In the event that student is not located, parents (Head of Mission) and Police (Assistant Principal) to be notified immediately. Assistant Principal to notify Principal.

Responsibilities:

Parent:

- To notify the College when the student is absent, by ringing the Student Services Office on 4754 1022.

Student Services:

- To notify Homeroom Teacher and Leader of Mission by email following parent notification of absence.
- To notify Principal, Leader of Mission, Head of Mission, Student Counsellor and Assistant Principal following classroom teacher notification of absence from class.

Homeroom Teacher

- To liaise with Leader of Mission re: student attendance and support structures.
- To notify Leader of Mission immediately if student is not present in Homeroom and no notification email has been received from Student Services.

Leader of Mission

- Fortnightly contact with parent to discuss student progress and support.
- To call parent immediately if student is not present in Homeroom without notification.
- To participate in whole school search for student if not present in class, following notification from Student Services, if available.
- To liaise with Head of Mission and Student Counsellor re: student progress.

Classroom Teacher

- To notify Student Services immediately if student is not present in class, following iris check to confirm attendance in Homeroom.

Head of Mission

- To initiate this protocol following notification re: student care requirements.
- To liaise with parent and student re: progress.
- To participate in whole school search following notification of student absence from class.
- To ring parents if whole school search is unsuccessful.
- To monitor application of protocol responsibilities.

Assistant Principal

- To participate in whole school search for student when missing from class.
- Not notify police is whole school search is unsuccessful after 15 minutes.
- To notify Principal of student's absence from school or class.
- To notify Principal if police have been called.

Critical Care Search Protocol 1.6. 2017

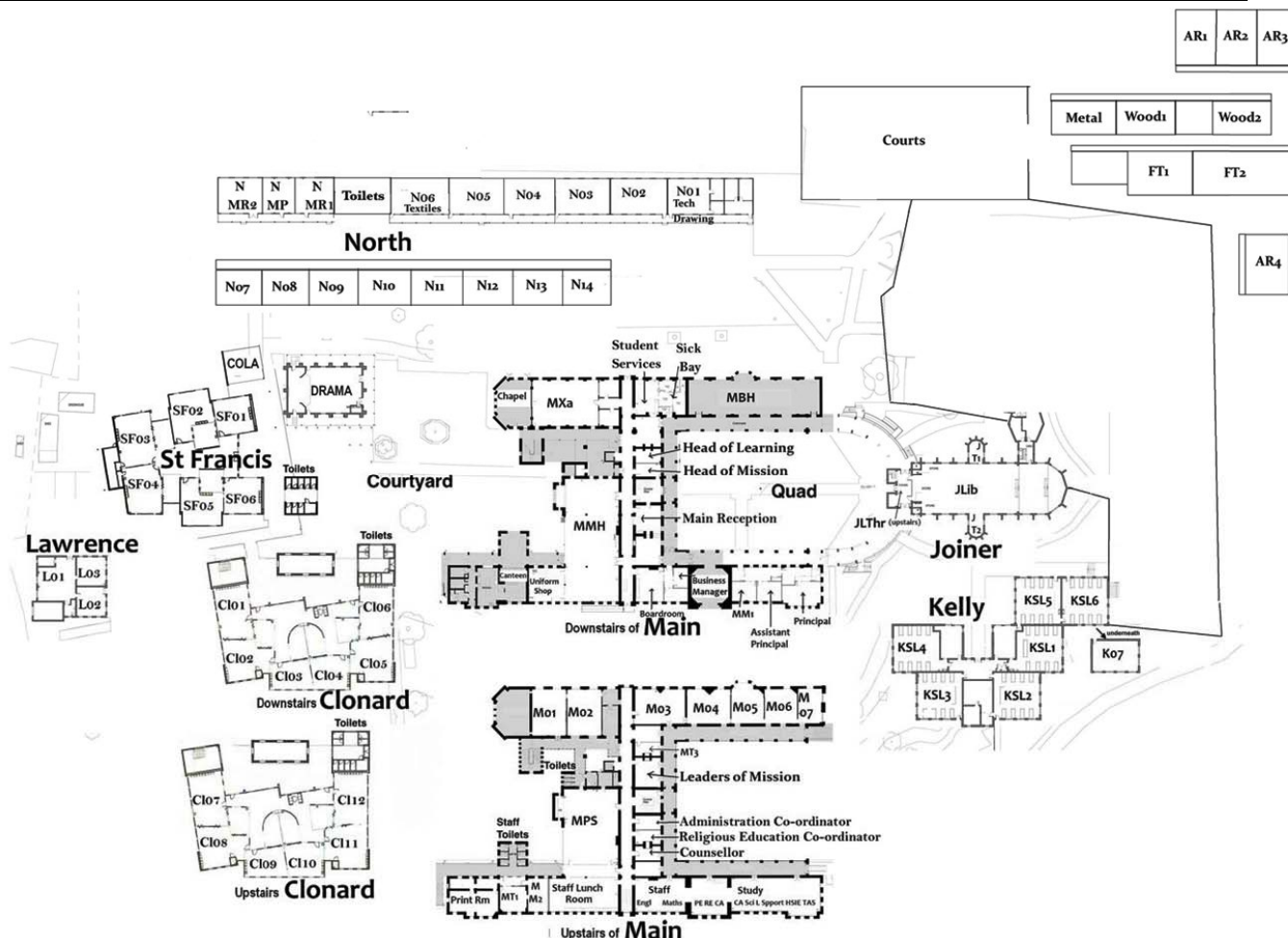
MOBILE PHONE NUMBERS

PRINCIPAL PAUL RYAN MOBILE: 0408 418 117	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CAROL MUSCAT MOBILE: 0407 743 028	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ROSS GAWTHORNE MOBILE: 0409 033 011
PRINCIPAL'S PA KAREN DELANY MOBILE: 0427 072 092	REC MARK SATTLER MOBILE: 0448 976 377	BUSINESS MANAGER CHRIS CARPENTER MOBILE: 0416 000 229
SCHOOL COUNSELLOR CRAIG KING MOBILE: 0422 376 988	LEARNING SUPPORT CO-ORD MELISSA MORAN MOBILE: 0408 649 421	ADMIN CO-ORDINATOR COLLEEN MITCHELL MOBILE: 0448 804 733
LITERACY & NUMERACY CO-ORD CANDICE FERREY MOBILE: 0407 447 389	Springwood Police Station 02 4751 0299	

SEARCH PROTOCOL

1. Highlight Leader in charge of search.
2. Name of student missing _____
3. Highlight the area you have been asked to search (1 female and 1 male LOL/LOM in each search team if possible)
4. Search area.
5. Contact Leader in charge of search if you locate student (if no answer contact Karen) and describe student's state OR return to Principal and Assistant Principal Office if student is not located.
6. Leader in charge of search wait for all LOL and LOMs to return. Speak to Principal if 15 mins has passed, Principal or AP to then call Police for assistance.

Name of LOM/LOL	AREA
	Courts and Henson: Check Courts, Chicken coop (behind courts), Henson oval, lower basketball courts and squash courts (front and behind).
	Art rooms, Metal, Wood, Food Tech and both change rooms. Go around back of old food tech, Science and return through busbay.
	EAST: Go to library, check toilets near Technology hub , Technology hub, walk around back of library and then Science block.
	Lower Main building: Brauer Hall, Student services, Head of Learning office, Head of Mission office, Staff toilet, Reception office, Moran Hall, Canteen, Xavier study, Chapel, Roselee office, meeting room, Chris C office and archway.
	Upper Main building: MO6 to M01 (this includes Japanese rooms), Presentation space and bathrooms outside, LOMs office, Admin office, RE office, Counsellor office, spare room, staff lunch room, staff annexes, photocopy room, staff upstairs toilets and staff study.
	NORTH: M01 to N14. Including two toilets and ASPECT room. Knock on all doors to check.
	WEST: Ag farm, Drama room, St Francis (SF01-SF06), St Francis toilets and back of St Francis.
	Lawrence: L01-L03, go around whole block, back of clonard garage, road to Rectory, around Rectory, out to car park and look out to Grotto.
	Clonard: Upstairs and downstairs Clonard including toilets and locker area. Check both stair areas. (May need to take tool/coin to open toilets after knocking, announcing that you are opening the door in 1 minute, wait 1 minute and open doors). Please ensure you are in a male and female team.
	Chris Carpenter: On approval from Paul/Peta or other Leadership Team member, go to Grotto, Collesseum and front driveway with a female LOL or LOM .



Strategies for Improving Attendance

- Analysis of attendance data by LOMs at fortnightly LOM meeting and student awareness via information and reward program at Year Assemblies.
- Interviews with parents, Homeroom Teachers and Leader of Mission.
- Reviewing education program of student with parents and relevant staff.
- Referral to College Counsellor.
- Convening Attendance Planning Meeting
- Register communication of attendance data to parents via Skoolbag and newsletter
- Using support from CEDP Student Services.
- The outcomes of meetings are to be recorded and copies of implemented plans are to be kept as a record.

When College-based interventions are unsuccessful:

If a problem with a student's attendance persists following the implementation of the above listed options, the Principal will notify the Diocesan office.

Attendance audits will be conducted in Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 of each term. Those students who are deemed to have unsatisfactory attendance will be supported through the Diocesan Attendance Intervention guidelines.

Ongoing attendance issues will result in the implementation of the following strategies in an attempt to improve attendance:

Steps for responding to Habitual Unexplained Non attendance at school of children and young people in Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta

Note: this is a minimum requirement. If at any stage there is a need to escalate the response please consult the DoSP

