Delany College Granville

Attendance Policy

Reviewed April 2017

Table of Contents

Rationale

- It is the duty of the State to ensure that every child receives an education of the highest quality and it is the duty of parents and caregivers to comply with the compulsory education requirements of the Education Act 1990.
- Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential.
- Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.
- While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as a part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.
- A child between the age of 6 and 17 may leave school only after they have completed Year 10 of secondary education. One of the ways of completing Year 10 of secondary education is to complete education through a special circumstance approved by the Minister for Education and Training.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:
- enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered non-government school or registering them with the Board of Studies NSW for home schooling
- ensuring that their children attend school regularly
- explaining the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school and
- taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.

School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:
- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of well-being and belonging to the school community
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise
- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that:
- students are enrolled consistent with the Diocesan enrolment policy
- attendance records are maintained in a Diocesan-approved format and are an accurate
- record of the attendance of students
- staff record accurately the attendance of each student in each lesson when lessons are conducted in a number of locations
- a system is established for signing out students who need to leave the school premises during school hours

- all attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible to the Diocesan Director or authorised Diocesan officer and to the Board of Studies Inspector
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern to the Diocesan Director or authorised Diocesan officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom school strategies have failed to restore regular attendance
- relevant school policies and procedures address attendance issues including truancy. They should provide strategies for encouraging good attendance and establish structures and procedures that support teachers in addressing issues of student non-attendance
- school staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised
- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.

Return to top of document

Procedures

Marking attendance

- Student attendance is marked in rolls taken during morning homeroom on CEDP FACES
- The office records late absences using FACES.
- Parents contacted via SMS to notify them of the absence.
- Notes explaining absences are to be collected by the homeroom teachers, directly at the admin office, or received by email or phone message, and must be received within 7 days since returning back to school.
- A text message is sent to parents if an explanation has not been received within the seven days to notify the absence will be recorded as unexplained.
- Names of students attending sporting events, excursions, work experience or events to be deemed school business must be given to the office prior to the event. They will be then recorded on FACES.
- In the case of students participating in course work or school activities away from the school site (such as work placements), an accurate record of student attendance at other sites should be given to the office at the conclusion of each school week.
- Students leaving school to attend TAFE, flexible timetable or approved leave will be issued with a leave pass that period of time.
- Students wishing to be granted exemption from attending school for a period of time must make written application to the Principal a minimum of 5 days prior to the event. Parents will be requested to complete the application "Exemption from Attendance". If granted a "Certificate of Attendance" will be issued for the period of absence.

Electronic attendance registers

- A hard copy of the electronic record is to be generated fortnightly. The principal or delegated school executive must endorse this hard copy, certifying its accuracy. Once signed, this hard copy becomes the official record of attendance, the filed and must not be amended.
- A hard copy of the electronic record of individual students must be generated at the end of each term and attached to the student record file.
- In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure are recorded with the relevant attendance code.
- Codes to be used on electronic attendance registers are found in Appendix A. Additional codes are not to be used.

Storage and archiving of student attendance records

- Written explanations - If a letter is handed in by the student to the homeroom teacher this is placed in the class pouch and taken to the office. This letter is removed from the pouch by the Administration team, the appropriate code is entered electronically on FACES & the letter is filed in student envelope awaiting filing to student main file. At the end of the year the contents of each individual envelope is transferred to the student's primary personal file.

- Certificates of exemption - Parents complete the Application for Exemption from Attendance due to Employment, Traineeship or Attendance at TAFE, Employment in the Entertainment Industry OR participation in the Elite Sports Program and hand it in at the College Office.
https://oscarwiki.parra.catholic.edu.au/confluence/display/pss/School+Attendance.
- The Principal completes the Certification Documentation either approving or denying the Exemption from Attendance based on the facts.
- The Certificate is posted to the Parents

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

- Leave of ten (10) or more school days will require a formal application for leave in writing. This letter of request should be addressed to the Principal prior to commencing the leave period indicating the specific reason or purpose for the request of leave.
- Principals should consider each application as it presents individually, and notify parents, carers, and class attendance roll teachers in writing of the outcome of this request and how it should be coded into the attendance register/system accordingly.

Return to top of document

Monitoring Student Absences

- The homeroom teacher is the regular point of contact and therefore should always monitor student absences.
- If a student has been absent for three consecutive days the mentor teacher is required to call a parent or guardian
- Student absences are continually monitored by Student Learning Leader, Leaders of Learning and Assistant Principal.
- The Student Learning Leaders, with the Assistant Principal, conduct periodic reviews of absences to identify emerging, chronic and complex cases of absenteeism
- Mentor teachers make a phone call to parents of students in the emerging category to highlight the pattern and offer support.
- Student Learning Leaders make a phone call to parents of students in the chronic category to highlight the pattern and offer support. If a student remains in this category for more than one review period an interview is arranged with parent(s). Meeting notes are to be stored in the Student Information System.
- The Assistant Principal meets with parents or carers of all students in the complex category. Interview notes are recorded and a letter sent to parents with the details of the discussion. An attendance plan is established in this interview and monitored throughout the period after this meeting. The student may be referred to the school counsellor or to the CEDP Attendance team at this point.

Staff training in student attendance procedures

- All teaching staff (including casual staff) and administration staff
- Training is provided at the beginning of each year (refresher). Details in Delany Staff Handbook.
- New staff are trained during induction process and also in Delany Staff Handbook
- Administration staff also attending FACES refreshers and updates at AKC
- Procedures for roll marking (in class and administration) are covered in this training as well as the procedures for monitoring and following up absenteeism

Recording student attendance in an emergency

- As per Evacuation policy.
- As per Lockdown policy.

Procedures to monitor and report on attendance

Daily
- generate and email to staff the daily attendance report

Weekly - as required
- report emerging, chronic and complex attendance
- generate emerging letters as required
- generate conference referrals to CEDP
- review meetings, correspondance and response from letters
- generate complex and chronic letters as required
- Student Learning Leader team meeting to discuss attendance issues (fortnightly StLL meetings)

End of term
- generate letters to those students in the 95% and 100% attendance categories

Attendance Working Party

The College has established an Attendance Working party to review and recommend strategies that maximise the attendance at school for all students.

Reference documents

Student Attendance – NSW Catholic Systemic Schools Student Attendance (Catholic Education Parramatta)
ACARA National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting

Return to top of document

Appendix A - Attendance codes

	Attendance Register Codes **Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence**
Symbol	**Meaning**
A	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 It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: - 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	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: - misadventure or unforseen 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	The student was suspended from school
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: - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses

Attendance Register Codes **Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance** (not counted as an absence for statistical purposes)	
Symbol	**Meaning**
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: - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H	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: - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

Return to top of document