



ST PIUS X COLLEGE

CHATSWOOD

Student Attendance Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Regular attendance at school is essential for every student's learning, wellbeing, and future opportunities. EREA NSW Colleges Ltd is committed to promoting and supporting student attendance as a shared responsibility between families, schools and the wider community. Our commitment to equity and excellence includes ensuring that every student is given the opportunity to engage fully in school life, every day. We also recognise that encouraging consistent attendance is a vital part of our mission to serve our students, especially those who may be vulnerable or at the margins as articulated in the EREA Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition.

In line with the Education Act 1990 (NSW) all children from the age of six to the minimum school leaving age of 17 are legally required to attend school, unless they are registered for home schooling or granted an exemption.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline our student attendance requirements and ensure that:

- students in EREA NSW schools are encouraged, supported and empowered to attend school every day
- student attendance is monitored daily
- appropriate collaborative support and interventions are in place to address any barriers to regular school attendance
- accurate records relating to student attendance are maintained

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to EREA NSW Colleges Ltd staff, students and parents/carers of students enrolled at EREA NSW Colleges.

2 Policy Principles

2.1 Attending School

- 2.1.1 All students who are enrolled at an EREA NSW College are expected to attend the school each day unless they are unwell or unable to attend for an approved reason or have been granted an exemption.
- 2.1.2 An effective process is in place for staff to monitor student attendance in the form of an attendance register (roll).
- 2.1.3 The NSW College will ensure a system is established for signing out students who need to leave the premises during school hours.
- 2.1.4 The NSW College will regularly provide information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements, the positive impact of high rates of attendance, and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

2.2 Celebrating Student Attendance

- 2.2.1 EREA NSW Colleges Ltd recognises that celebrating student attendance is a powerful way to foster engagement, build community, and promote a culture of belonging.
- 2.2.2 Each NSW College implements inclusive and meaningful strategies that acknowledge and celebrate students' commitment to attending school regularly.

2.3 Student Absence

- 2.3.1 The NSW College will ensure that an effective process is in place for staff to monitor and manage student absence, including active review of explanations, requests and reasons, and contacting parents/carers promptly following an unexplained absence.
- 2.3.2 Colleges take a proactive approach to monitoring and responding to student attendance concerns. A minimum attendance rate of 90% is expected for all students. Attendance support measures are initiated based on overall attendance patterns, including full-day and part-day absences such as lateness or early departures. All absences - explained or unexplained - are taken into account; explained absences may still reflect underlying health or wellbeing issues, disengagement from learning, or other barriers that place students at risk of academic and social disadvantage.
- 2.3.3 Families are strongly encouraged to schedule travel during designated school holiday periods. Extended absences due to travel at the beginning and/or end of term will be recorded as unjustified unless prior approval has been granted by the Principal.
- 2.3.4 Students' participation in any school programs impacting student attendance must be approved by the Principal.
- 2.3.5 The College will take appropriate action to investigate all student attendance concerns (including part-day absences such as lateness) and respond promptly to any school attendance matter concerns, recognising that ongoing absences may point towards students' welfare, wellbeing and safety issues.
- 2.3.6 Parents have seven (7) days to explain student absences, before the absence is recorded as an unexplained absence.

- 2.3.7 Principals have the discretion to accept or reject explanations for student absences, or request more information or supporting evidence, in accordance with legislative and policy requirements.
- 2.3.8 In considering absence explanations, Principals balance procedural fairness with a compassionate understanding of each student's context and wellbeing.
- 2.3.9 An appropriate number of staff members are adequately supported to act as student attendance mentors for students with attendance below 80%.

2.4 Certificate of Exemption

- 2.4.1 A Certificate of Exemption, granted under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) allows a student to be legally absent from school for a specified period without the absence being recorded as unjustified.
- 2.4.2 Under Section 25 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW), Principals have the delegated authority to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption from attending school for any one student due to:
 - engagement in approved entertainment industry activities
 - participation in elite arts or elite sporting events
 - exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
 - a direction of the Public Health Act 2010.
- 2.4.3 Applications for exemptions must be made in advance of the period sought on an application form provided by the NSW College.
- 2.4.4 The certificate of exemption must only be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the parents/carers that an exemption is in the student's best interests in the short and long term. Alternatives to exemption should have been fully explored.
- 2.4.5 A certificate of exemption should not be approved where the student has been the subject of a child protection report to the Department of Communities and Justice and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm. Prior to granting a certificate of exemption a risk assessment should be completed to identify and manage risks.
- 2.4.6 Exemptions are not generally applied for the reason of travel or extended leave. The Principal will assess the application and decide whether the application is in the best interest of the student.
- 2.4.7 The Certificates of Exemption issued by the Principal must include any specific conditions that apply to the exemption, state that the exemption may be cancelled if any such conditions are not met or cease to apply, specify dates for which the exemption has been granted, including hours of program participation if a part day exemption period applies. The original certificate of exemption is provided to the parents/carers.

2.5 Procedural Fairness in Applications for Certificates of Exemption

- 2.5.1 Procedural fairness must be accorded to an applicant for a Certificate of Exemption. If the Principal is considering refusing an exemption, the parents/carers should be given an opportunity to respond to the identified

concerns before a final decision is made. This opportunity should be offered in writing.

2.5.2 If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision made by a Principal, the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Complaints Handling Policy and procedures apply.

2.5.3 The Principal can cancel the Certificate of Exemption where they identify circumstances that they believe warrant this action. For example, where the conditions attached to the exemption are not being met or cease to apply.

2.6 Attendance Record-Keeping

2.6.1 The College maintains an accurate attendance register (roll) in a form consistent with legislative obligations and securely retains any records relating to student absences (such as medical certificates, phone logs, text messages, statutory declarations etc.) and exemptions.

2.6.2 The attendance register records absences using the Minister-approved common codes and includes information for each students regarding:

- daily attendance or absence
- reason for absence
- evidence to support reason for absence

2.6.3 Unsatisfactory attendance information and applications for exemptions from attendance is kept in student files.

2.6.4 Daily attendance information recorded in a register (roll) is retained in accordance with the Records and Retention Policy.


3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principals	<p>Under Section 24 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW), Principals are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collect and maintain student records of attendance • keep a register of the enrolments and daily attendance of all students at the school using the approved attendance codes • have available for inspection during school hours the enrolment, attendance and any unsatisfactory attendance of students at the school. <p>Principals also have the delegated authority to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption from attending school for a student.</p> <p>Principals identify, support and provide adequate resources to staff members who can act as student attendance mentors (eg Homeroom teachers)</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Parents/Carers</p>	<p>Under Section 22 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW) it is the duty of a parent of a child of compulsory school age to cause the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school; or • to be registered for home schooling with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject. <p>Parents of students enrolled in EREA NSW Colleges are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their child attends school each day unless exempt or absent for an approved reason • work in partnership with the College to plan and implement strategies to support their child’s regular attendance at school and address issues impacting attendance • explain the absence of a student as soon as possible and within seven (7) days from the first day of absence, otherwise the College will record the absence as an unexplained absence • provide a medical certificate where a student’s frequent, recurring or long-term absence is due to illness • apply in advance for planned student leave following the College’s procedure for Exemption from Attendance.
<p style="text-align: center;">Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</p>	<p>The CEO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide support and guidance to Principals in the implementation of this Policy • ensure this Policy is implemented at all EREA NSW Colleges • ensure this Policy is reviewed and updated as needed • report to EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board on compliance with this Policy
<p style="text-align: center;">Student Attendance Mentor</p>	<p>A staff member who supports students experiencing challenges with regular attendance. The staff member should have an established relationship with the student and be placed to provide personalised support, collaborate with families and other staff and monitor attendance progress.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board (Board)</p>	<p>EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approving this Policy • reviewing compliance with this Policy.

4 Definitions

Term	Definition
Attendance	<p>A student is considered to be in attendance at school when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend the school site while the school is open for instruction, or • participate in a school approved activity during school hours, or • participate in an off-site learning program approved by the school
Parents/Carers	Includes a guardian or other person who has the custody and care of the student.
Elite arts or elite sporting events	Refers to national/international sports events, elite programs run by national and international organisations, talent identification programs run by NSW Dept Sport and Recreation.
EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board	Entity that operates EREA schools in NSW. It is the proprietor of the NSW Schools/Colleges. It includes the EREA NSW Office and its NSW Colleges.
EREA NSW Office	EREA NSW Colleges Ltd office serving and supporting the NSW Colleges.
NSW Colleges	<p>Any school or entity governed by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd. The seven NSW Colleges are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Brothers High School, Lewisham • Edmund Rice College, Wollongong • St Dominic’s College, Penrith • St Edward’s College, East Gosford • St Patrick’s College, Strathfield • St Pius X College, Chatswood • Waverley College, Waverley
Unexplained absence	An absence is unexplained if the parents/carers of the student have failed to provide an approved reason via accepted communication channels within seven (7) days of the student’s absence.

Minister-approved common codes for attendance	School Attendance REGISTER CODES ▼										
	Step 1: Record student absence or variation to attendance										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;">a</td> <td>The student was absent for the whole day</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92D050;">Pa</td> <td>The student was absent for part of the day</td> </tr> </table>		a	The student was absent for the whole day	Pa	The student was absent for part of the day					
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As approved from time to time by the Minister											

5 Policy Compliance

5.1 Breach of this Policy

EREA NSW Colleges Ltd takes infringements of this Policy very seriously. Staff who fail to abide by these principles may face disciplinary action, including dismissal.

5.2 Policy Review

A review of this Policy shall be conducted every three years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation.

The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO is responsible for ensuring this Policy is reviewed and updated as needed.

6 EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Related Policies, Documents and Legislation

6.1 Related Policies and Documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and documents:

- NSW Department of Education [Exemption from school procedure](#)
- Student Attendance Procedures
- Complaints Handling Policy

6.2 Related legislative instruments

The following legislation, standards and regulations apply, and this Policy aligns with these mandated requirements:

- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 (NSW)

6.3 Version Control

Action	Detail
Responsible Director	CEO
Approved by	EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board
Approval date	21 January 2026

Review Date	T1 2029
Policy ID	2026-05