



# ST PIUS X COLLEGE

## CHATSWOOD

## Student Attendance Procedure

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Background

Regular attendance at school is essential for every student's learning, wellbeing, and future opportunities. The purpose of this Procedure is to create a standardised process for NSW Colleges to monitor, record and support student school attendance.

### 2. Procedure

#### 2.1 Attending School

- 2.1.1 An effective process is in place for staff to monitor student attendance at school and during school activities in the form of an attendance register (roll). This roll is taken at the beginning of the day (as early as practical), and at the commencement of each subsequent period, including practical lessons, evacuations, drills, incursions, excursions, camps, retreats and other school activities.
- 2.1.2 Students signing out / leaving the premises during school hours have specific parental permission, approval from the relevant Pastoral Leader or their delegate, and formally sign out of the College so their absence is recorded correctly.
- 2.1.3 Students leaving during school hours are collected by parents/carers and are not permitted to leave the premises unaccompanied. Alternative arrangements for senior students can be made at the Principal's discretion.

#### 2.2 Celebrating Student Attendance

- 2.2.1 The College celebrates student attendance through whole-school strategies by embedding attendance messages into wellbeing and Pastoral Care programs. Families are engaged in celebrating attendance milestones and progress.
- 2.2.2 Effort and progress are recognised as well as excellent, consistent attendance. Students with excellent or improved attendance are acknowledged through certificates, awards or privileges.
- 2.2.3 Celebrations of student attendance are culturally safe, inclusive, accessible and meaningful for students.

## **2.3 Student Absence**

- 2.3.1 If a student is absent from school at the beginning of the day, communication is promptly sent to the parents/carers requesting information about that student's absence. If the parent responds, the explanation is recorded in the student management system, and if there is no response the student is recorded as 'absent-unexplained.'
- 2.3.2 If the Principal determines that an explanation for a student's absence is not acceptable, the absence will be recorded as unjustified, and the Principal or delegate will communicate the decision and reasoning to the parents/carers. The Principal or delegate may request more information or supporting documentation to inform the decision.
- 2.3.3 Frequent or long-term absences (more than 2 days) due to sickness may require a medical certificate to ensure the absence is justified, to support student wellbeing, develop a health care plan if applicable or ensure appropriate school support is in place for the medical condition.
- 2.3.4 At least each fortnight, a Student Attendance list highlighting student absence is generated for the Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care and each Pastoral Leader.
- 2.3.5 The process for initiating attendance support is detailed in Appendix 1.

## **2.4 Certificate of Exemption**

- 2.4.1 Parents/carers submit a completed Certificate of Exemption application form prior to the requested exemption period. Applications are made using the approved form provided by the College and include supporting documentation that demonstrates the necessity or desirability of the exemption (documents may include medical reports, event invitations, public health directives etc.).
- 2.4.2 A Certificate of Exemption may only be granted when it is clearly demonstrated that the exemption is in the student's best interests. Before granting an exemption, the Principal or delegate must:
  - ensure that all alternatives to exemption (eg distance education, flexible learning arrangements) have been fully explored
  - conduct a risk assessment to identify and manage any potential risks, particularly where child protection concerns exist
  - consult with the Director of Safeguarding if there are unresolved child wellbeing or protection issues
- 2.4.3 If approved, the Principal will issue the original Certificate of Exemption, retaining a copy on the student's file. The Certificate must specify:
  - the reason for exemption
  - the dates and, if applicable, hours of exemption (full or part day absences up to 100 days in a 12-month period may be approved)
  - any conditions attached to the exemption
  - a statement that the exemption may be cancelled if the conditions are not met or cease to apply.
- 2.4.4 Applications may be rejected if the exemption is not in the student's best interests; the documentation is insufficient or incomplete; there are

unresolved child protection concerns; the reason for the exemption (eg travel or extended leave) does not meet policy criteria.

## 2.5 Record-Keeping

- 2.5.1 The College's daily attendance register (roll) is maintained and includes enrolment details, daily attendance records and notifications or explanations for absences. The register is available for inspection during school hours by authorised persons or inspectors.
- 2.5.2 Attendance is recorded using Minister-approved common codes (see Appendix 2).
- 2.5.3 All records relating to student absences including medical certificates, phone logs, text messages, statutory declarations, and exemption documentation are securely stored in accordance with the EREA NSW Privacy Policy and Records Retention Policy. These records are retained in the student's individual file and are only accessible to authorised staff.
- 2.5.4 Information regarding unsatisfactory attendance and any applications for exemption from attendance are documented and retained in the student's file (including correspondence with parents/carers, risk assessments, and decisions made by the Principal).
- 2.5.5 Daily attendance records are retained for seven (7) years after the end of the calendar year in which the records were created. Individual student files containing unsatisfactory attendance history or exemption documents are retained for seven (7) years after the student leaves the school.

## 3. EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Related Policies, Documents and Legislation

### 3.1 Related Policies and Documents

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

- NSW Department of Education [Exemption from school procedure](#)
- EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Student Attendance Policy

### 3.2 Related legislative instruments

The following legislation, standards and regulations apply, and this Procedure 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)

### 3.3 Version Control

Action	Detail
Subject Matter Expert	CEO
Approved by	EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board
Approval date	21 January 2026
Review date	T1 2029
Policy ID	2606-6

## Appendix 1 – Attendance Support Thresholds initiation

90%-100% Attendance: Proactive Affirmation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and reinforce importance of regular attendance</li> <li>• Foster positive relationships</li> <li>• Implement formal and informal methods of celebrating attendance</li> <li>• Monitor attendance for signs of slippage for early intervention</li> </ul>
80%-89% Attendance: Intervention Level 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the student and family to understand underlying factors contributing to non-attendance</li> <li>• Monitor and reinforce importance of regular attendance</li> <li>• Foster positive relationships and consider allocating a student attendance mentor (eg Homeroom teacher)</li> <li>• Celebrate attendance</li> <li>• Alert the Counsellor for wellbeing support</li> <li>• Continue with regular family updates until rate at or above 90%</li> </ul>
50%-79% Attendance: Intervention Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care, Head of Junior School and/or Deputy Principal collaborates with the student and family to understand underlying factors contributing to non-attendance</li> <li>• Monitor and reinforce importance of regular attendance</li> <li>• Initiate an Attendance Plan, allocate a student attendance mentor and alert the SEED Team if applicable</li> <li>• Considering the individual circumstances and reasons for the absences, a mandatory report regarding educational neglect may be warranted</li> <li>• Continue direct family contact (in-person meetings, regular emails etc)</li> </ul>
0%-49% Attendance: Intervention Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal collaborates with the CEO, other SLT, the student and family to understand underlying factors contributing to non-attendance</li> <li>• External support is sought (NDIS coordinator, Psychologist etc)</li> <li>• Attendance plan is renewed and agreed upon with student, family and College</li> <li>• Considering the individual circumstances and reasons for the absences, a mandatory report regarding educational neglect may be warranted</li> <li>• Continue direct family contact (in-person meetings, regular emails etc)</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 – Minister-Approved Common Attendance Codes

The following codes are approved by the NSW Minister for Education and must be used consistently when recording student attendance in the official register (roll) ([link](#)).

Code	Description
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation.</li> </ul> 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals</li> <li>- travel in Australia and overseas</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HSC Pathways Program</li> <li>- Best Start Assessments</li> <li>- Trial or HSC examinations</li> <li>- VET courses</li> </ul>
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"> <li>- work experience</li> <li>- school sport (regional and state carnivals)</li> <li>- school excursions</li> <li>- student exchange</li> </ul> The "B" code includes student exchange and allows for some additional flexibility around its use.

H	<p>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.</p> <p>The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- tutorial centre and programs</li><li>- behaviour schools</li><li>- juvenile justice</li><li>- hospital schools</li><li>- distance education</li></ul> <p>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 seasonal or full-time basis.</p>
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Note: The use of these codes must be supported by appropriate documentation where required.