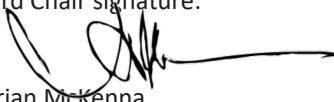




Student Attendance Policy

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Approved by Southern Christian College Board:	Board Chair signature:  Adrian McKenna	Date of Authorisation: March 2022
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Owner:	Southern Christian College	

Introduction

Southern Christian College regards consistent student school attendance during a student's education years as critical to providing positive educational outcomes to support and guide a student's future. It is the responsibility of the College, in partnership with parents and students, to ensure that students enrolled in the College attend school regularly.

Purpose

This policy assists the College to meet the expectations and standards of the College community. It also supports and works to improve student attendance and participation at College, and:

- To maximise learning opportunities by ensuring regular student school attendance;
- To comply with the College's duty of care expectations for enrolled students;
- To meet legislative and regulatory obligations with regard to student attendance; and
- To put into place agreed processes for managing absenteeism within the College.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Southern Christian College.

Background

It is compulsory for all students between the age of 5 and Year 12, who turn 18, or Complete a Certificate III, whichever comes first, who are residents in Tasmania, to attend an approved educational facility. These students are required by law to be in full-time attendance unless officially exempt or excused, or approved for home education. Students whose education is irregular risk not developing important skills and abilities essential to success in later life beyond School.

Aims

This policy provides the College with a clear set of strategies to meet its legislative and regulatory obligations with regard to student attendance.

Policy

The College has an attendance expectation of 95%.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- Enrolling their children of compulsory school age and ensuring that their children attend the College regularly;
- Explaining to the College the absences of their children promptly and within seven days; and
- Taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.

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

- Promoting a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the College community;
- Contacting parents/carers of those students who have not notified the College of their absence, and have not attended Pastoral Care in the morning;
- Maintaining accurate records of student attendance across the day;
- Implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise;
- Providing clear information to students and parents/carers regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance; and
- Following up non-attendance with parents/carers.

The Principal is responsible for implementing procedures and systems that ensure:

- Students are enrolled consistent with the College Student Enrolment Policy;
- Attendance records are maintained in accordance with the College approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students;
- Staff accurately record student attendance;
- A system is established for signing out students who need to leave the College premises during College hours e.g. appointments;
- All attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible to the Tasmanian Education Registrar or any other authority;
- Documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- The Tasmanian Education Registrar is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom strategies have failed to restore regular attendance;
- Relevant policies and procedures address attendance issues including truancy;
- Structures and procedures are established that support staff in addressing issues of student non-attendance;
- Staff are trained to implement College attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised. Staff induction and training remains a recurring priority;
- Staff, parents/carers and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements;

- All cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented. College processes should define identification and response;
- Whenever a class is conducted at a site other than the College site, attendance must be recorded.
- Best practice at the College is to monitor attendance each lesson in the Secondary School, and after each break in the Primary School;
- There may also be situations due to the nature of the College location and its off-campus programs (RISE, Fusion, 9 QUEST, excursions, etc) or the attendance record of particular students where further attendance monitoring may need to be implemented;
- All reasonable measures are taken to contact parents/carers promptly concerning an unexplained absence;
- If a student has failed to attend because of sickness or incapacity (unless they have a medical or other condition that makes them more susceptible than those without the condition) for a total of five (5) days in any school year, the College will request a medical certificate, or statutory declaration, for any further absences;
- In the case of students participating in course work or school activities away from the College site (such as work placements), the Principal or an authorised person should regularly obtain an accurate record of student attendance at other sites; and
- Ensure that attendance is reported to parents/carers three (3) times a year; Interim Reports; Mid-Year Reports; and End of Year Reports.

The Principal may grant and permit:

- Sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness and/or temporary physical or mental incapacity which prevents the student from attending;
- A school-aged child or youth to be excused from attendance at College for a period the Principal considers reasonable in the following circumstances:
 - Bereavement of a person with whom the school-aged child or youth has a close, significant or family relationship; or
 - Medical, legal or related appointments; or
 - Where the school-aged child or youth has witnessed or been subjected to family violence; or
 - Terminal illness of an immediate family member; or
 - Where a natural disaster or extreme weather event prevents the student attending College; or
 - For a recognised (i.e. a National or International level event sanctioned and organised by the official governing body) sporting, academic or cultural event where the students is a participant and/or official;
- An absence on the grounds of suspension, expulsion, or temporarily excluded from College; and
- The Principal may decline to accept as satisfactory an explanation for an absence. The parent/carer should be advised in writing that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided;

Other relevant reference documents

- SCC Student Attendance Procedure
- SCC Student Enrolment Policy
- SCC Student Engagement Policy
- SCC College Fees Policy
- SCC Student Induction Procedure 2022
- Government of Tasmania; *Education Act 2016*
- Minister of Education; *Ministerial Instruction No.4: Students excused from daily attendance at school*;
<https://documentcentre.education.tas.gov.au/Documents/Students-Excused-from-Daily-Attendance-at-School-Ministerial-No-4.pdf> (Accessed: 22/03/2022)
- Department of Education; “Authorised absences in non-government schools”;
<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/parent-fact-sheets/authorised-absences/> (Accessed: 22/03/2022)