



## **Student Attendance**

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### **Related Policies**

- [Attendance at School \(ACT\)](#), Catholic Education Office
- [Enrolment](#), Sacred Heart Primary School
- [Record Keeping - Schools](#), Catholic Education Office

### **Purpose**

To:

- clarify the responsibilities of the school in encouraging attendance, reporting and responding to absenteeism as determined in the *Education Act 2004 (the Act)*.
- clarify the statutory obligations of parents under the Act.
- provide consistency of student attendance record keeping procedures across the school and in line with the ACT Catholic School System.
- ensure that attendance is credible and accurate.

### **Definitions**

#### **Attendance records:**

Any and all hard copy documents and electronic records that record the attendance and non-attendance of a child at school.

#### **Authorised person:**

A person appointed by the Chief Executive of ACT Education and Training Directorate (the Directorate) under section 119 of the Act.

#### **Compulsory school age:**

A child is of compulsory school age if the child is at least 6 years old and under the age that the first of the following happens: the child completes Year 12; or, the child is 17 years old.

#### **Exemption certificate:**

Is a certificate issued by the Chief Executive exempting a child from the requirement to be enrolled with an education provider or registered for home education; or the full-time participation requirement.

#### **Parent:**

A person having parental responsibility for a child under the *Children and Young People Act 2008*; including a person or carer under the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, i.e. a person who provides regular and substantial care for the child or young person.

**Student:**

A person who is enrolled as a student in the school.

**Principal's delegate:**

This person will be either the Office Manager or the Assistant Principal. They will be selected based upon the level of responsibility and confidentiality required for the delegated task.

**Policy**

Sacred Heart Primary School will record, maintain and store enrolment and attendance records for all students enrolled in the school.

The Principal, Office Manager and Classroom Teachers will remain diligent, consistent and current in their record keeping. They will use this data to identify issues or concerns around the attendance of individual students and work in collaboration with families, carers and relevant organisations to encourage school attendance.

At all times the procedures for encouraging attendance will be respectful of social, cultural and religious factors associated with indigenous students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and socially disadvantaged students.

**Procedures****Enrolment procedures**

At the time of enrolment of a new child, proof of residency, in the form of a utilities account, tenancy agreement, current driver's licence or similar, must be shown to the Principal of the school, or the Principal's delegate, the Office Manager. Proof of age and identity (e.g. a birth certificate or passport and immunisation records) must also be shown to the Principal, or the Principal's delegate, at the time of enrolment.

**Identification numbers and entering data**

A unique identification number beginning with 8240 will be allocated to a newly enrolled child in the school unless that child has been previously enrolled and allocated a registration number elsewhere in the ACT.

A child shall retain their existing registration number if this has been allocated by any other government or non-government school in the ACT.

The student will be officially enrolled using the name as indicated on the birth certificate.

The Principal can enrol a student under an alternative name or change an existing record to indicate a new name if:

- a signed consent from both parents indicates approval
- a court order is provided authorising the use of the new name
- a statutory declaration is provided by the enrolling parent indicating that the child has had no contact with the other parent for a period of five years and his or her whereabouts is unknown
- a signed consent from one parent and proof that the other parent is deceased (e.g. a statutory declaration or a death certificate)
- a birth certificate is issued in the new name
- proof of adoption is supplied

Where none of the above conditions are met then a change of name will not be made and the parent requesting the change informed that no change will be made until one of the conditions are met.

When a parent raises a concern about their child being known under another name with the Principal, the parent must be advised that a further change would only be made if there is a court order or written agreement of both parents.

Enrolment information will be entered directly into MAZE by the school before commencement of attendance.

This data will form the basis for attendance records.

### **Recording student attendance**

The class roll is a legal document. The roll can be requested for use of evidence in court cases, including family law, truancy and injuries. All rolls must be marked daily. At Sacred Heart Primary School attendance is recorded electronically using Civica Student Care.

- Legal names are entered alphabetically and electronically via Maze;
- all absences require written explanation from parent/guardian. Absentee notes are kept by the school, dated and signed by teachers;
- email notes are not accepted if they are not signed;
- teachers are required to send a letter home to parents/carers requesting written explanation of unexplained absences. These letters are generated electronically from Civica Student Care, Electronics Attendance Recording tool;
- the Principal is informed of all extended (3 days) unexplained absences;
- past hard copy rolls are kept at the school whilst electronic rolls are stored online;
- at the end of each year rolls and notes are archived;
- a hard copy of class lists are made available in a plastic folder which is hung on the back of or near the door of each classroom in case of evacuation;
- relief staff do not have access to the electronic roll, they are required to use the hard copy lists in the plastic folder in each classroom to mark the roll.

### **Electronic Attendance Recording**

This document provides guidelines for the use of electronic attendance recording in line with the policy guidelines for the Electronic Attendance Recording of Student Attendance used by Catholic systemic primary schools in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

The Civica Student Care application is hosted centrally within the CE (or wider CEnet) data network and requires a network connection for all operations. There is no 'offline' capability at present.

### **Accessing Student Care**

Access to Civica is available through Firefox, Chrome or Safari on the iPad by entering the following address field of your browser; **ces.cg.catholic.edu.au**.

Login using a current email logon (ACGNET\First Name.Surname and Password).

Access to Student Care is currently only available from the archdiocesan networks.

No direct internet access is available (ie from outside the CEO corporate network).

## **Student Information / Privacy**

Civica Student Care can present a significant amount of student information to teachers (as entered in Maze), some of which may be considered sensitive (including attendance information itself). It is therefore essential that staff adopt appropriate measures to ensure students or other unauthorised individuals do not have access to the logged-in application. In addition to good technology practices, measures include:

- Logging out of the application or locking the device when not in use
- Taking special care not to have the screen of the device presented on a large display
- Close supervision of the device when it is being used by students, particularly if the application may be logged in

## **Relief / Non-regular teaching staff procedures**

Civica Student Care requires a login(using CEO ACGNET domain credentials) that are linked explicitly to each school. Relief or casual staff need to record attendance, using the printed roll lists which can be found in a red folder hung behind/near each classroom door. The class teacher will subsequently transfer these details to Civica Student Care. Roll class student lists can also be generated by teachers in Student Care, by selecting a teaching group 'Students' page and selecting the print icon.

## **Management of Records Regular Hard Copy Record**

In order to meet attendance record-keeping requirements for the respective jurisdictions and CE, a hard copy of the electronic record is to generated at the end of each term. Class teachers are to provide the Assistant Principal with a signed hard copy set of the Weekly Attendance by Teaching Group for each term on the last day of each term. The Assistant Principal, as the Principal's delegate must endorse this hard copy, certifying its accuracy.

The printed (and signed) attendance reports are considered the legal record of attendance and must be stored and managed in line with relevant record-keeping requirements.

If corrections or updates are required to the data (e.g. late explanations or genuine errors) these changes should be annotated and initialled on the hard copy as well as updated in Civica Student Care.

CE recommends this printed copy be generated for periods 2 weeks earlier, as this should provide sufficient time for the school to receive explanations for prior absences and enter them into Student Care. This will minimise the number of manual corrections to the paper record required for parental explanations received after an absence.

In the event that records are required for inspection by an authorised person, or are subpoenaed by a court, attendance data may be provided in a number of ways:

- Provision of copies of printed records
- Direct access to Student Care user interface (contact the CE if required)
- Copies of Student Care data (contact the CE if required)

Signed notes from parents/carers must be provided to explain student absenteeism. These notes are to be retained and stored with student attendance information.

Sign-in and sign-out notes at the front office must be used by parents for late arrivals and early departures of students. Information from these notes is used by the class teachers to entre relevant times of arrival and departures.

When notes from parents are not provided letters can be generated through Student Care requesting a note for unexplained absences. Teachers can print these out when required. In week nine of each term the Assistant Principal will organise the generation of letters for all classes. These notes will be placed in class courier bags by office support staff for teachers to distribute appropriately.

### **Recording attendance / absence**

In line with existing policies, Student Care is configured for primary schools to record attendance at a morning and afternoon session ('AM/PM').

Teachers at Sacred Heart are required to use the ACT student attendance guideline codes as set out in Attachment 1a.

### **Updating Class Attendance Lists**

New student data is rolled over into Civia Student Care through Maze. Front Office Staff will prepare revised hard copy class lists for the relief roll. The class teacher will ensure that these revised hard copy lists are made available for relief staff.

Information for teachers related to Electron Roll and Student Attendance can be found in T Drive/ Electronic Rolls

### **Encouraging school attendance**

Attendance encouragement procedures will, where possible, be negotiated with the school community through the School Board. The procedures will always seek collaboration between school and families.

The teacher will inform the Principal if the child has:

- an unexplained absence for a length of time that is unusual for that child
- a pattern of unexplained absences
- an unexplained absence of more than 3 days where the child has still not returned to school
- non-consecutive and yet frequent unexplained absences occur
- non-consecutive and/or frequent unexplained late arrival or early departure occurs

Upon receiving notification by the teacher the Principal or their delegate will make contact with the family to inform them of the unexplained absences recorded and seek an explanation.

Where attendance becomes a challenge for a student or family, teachers and the Principal will work closely with appropriate individuals, parents and community organisations to develop a plan for encouraging attendance. This plan may involve addressing particular social, emotional, psychological needs for the student rather than be a series of incentives.

Where the school procedures are not successful in obtaining a reason for the unexplained absences the Principal will write to the parents/guardians, requesting that they and the student meet with the Principal or an authorised person for the purpose of working together to resolve issues that may be hindering the child's regular attendance. Parents must comply with the written request to meet.

The Principal will inform the Catholic Education Office of serious attendance issues.