



Student Attendance Policy and Procedures

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Attendance Policy is to document College, Student, and Legal Guardian roles and responsibilities regarding attendance and the procedures that must be followed to meet these obligations.

Rationale

Clairvaux MacKillop College is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, which enhances their holistic educational needs.

Clairvaux MacKillop College recognises that every day of attendance in school contributes toward a student's learning and that maximising school attendance enhances academic, employment and social outcomes. Correspondingly, research has shown direct correlations between poor attendance and student disengagement, exposure to 'at risk' behaviours and poor academic, employment and social outcomes. Accurate attendance records are an important Workplace Health and Safety requirement to monitor the wellbeing of all of our students.

Clairvaux MacKillop College is committed to promoting the key messages of the 'Every Day Counts' campaign which promotes the following:

- All children should be enrolled at school and attend school every day.
- Schools should monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- Truancy and chronic absenteeism can place a student in unsafe situations and impact their future employability and life choices.
- Attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Goal

Students, Legal Guardians, and Staff will work together to ensure all students meet the College expectation of 90% or above attendance and zero unexplained absences.

90% attendance equates to:

- 5 days absence per term
- 10 days absence per semester
- 20 days absence per year

Acceptable reasons for student absences are:

- Illness;
- Family trauma or bereavement;
- Events of cultural significance;
- Participation in school organised activities, eg. work experience;
- Participation in representative sporting or arts activities, e.g. Metropolitan Sporting Trials.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence are:

- Truancy;
- Shopping expeditions with or without parent or carer;
- Helping at home or at parent/caregiver's place of work;
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to or from work);
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours (e.g. haircuts, driving lessons)
- Completing assessment at home;
- Family holidays;
- Birthdays.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General requirements

Compulsory Schooling

The Queensland Government's education policy states that:

"Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must –

- b) ensure the child attends the State school or non-State school, on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled; unless the parent has a reasonable excuse."* Section 176(1)(b)

Students have two phases of schooling: *The Compulsory Schooling Phase* and *The Compulsory Participation Phase*.

The Compulsory Schooling Phase

- Starts the year a child turns 6. However, Prep is now compulsory in Queensland and a child must turn 5 by June 30 to start Prep. Parents can delay the child's entry to school, but they still must commence in Prep.
- Ends when the child turns 16 or finishes Year 10, whichever occurs first;
- During this phase, Legal Guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school every day.

The Compulsory Participation Phase

- Starts the year the child stops being of compulsory school age (i.e. reaches the age of 16 or completes Year 10)
- Ends when the child:
 - i. Gains a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV; **OR**
 - ii. Has participated in eligible options for two years after the completion of the Compulsory Schooling Phase; **OR**
 - iii. Turns 17.
- During this phase, Legal Guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child meets the attendance requirements of the eligible option of their choice.

▪ Roles and responsibilities of Legal Guardians

- ☑ To ensure your child is enrolled at and attends school. This is a legal obligation, as set out in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
- ☑ To make a commitment to meet the Clairvaux MacKillop College attendance goal upon enrolment of your child.
- ☑ To ensure your child attends school for the whole day on every scheduled school day unless:
 1. Your child is too sick to leave the home or has an infectious disease or an injury preventing movement around the school.
 2. A medical or dental appointment that could not be made out of school hours.
 3. The Principal is provided with another genuine and acceptable reason preventing your child's attendance.
- ☑ To provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences on or before the morning of the day of absence. (*see note below)
- ☑ To provide a prompt response to any text message, email or letter received regarding your child's absence from school, even if you think an error has been made.
- ☑ To seek approval from the Principal if your child is to be absent for an extended period (longer than one week of consecutive Absence).
- ☑ To contact school support staff (Pastoral Leaders, Counsellors or the Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing) if your child is reluctant or refusing to attend school.
- ☑ To initiate or attend support meetings to improve your child's school attendance.
- ☑ To provide notification of lateness via the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal
- ☑ To provide notification of an early departure via the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal or a dated and signed diary notification if your child is required to leave school early. (Please note that for student protection and safety purposes, students in Year 7 – Year 10 require a Legal Guardian or Legal Guardian approved delegate to present at Student Reception if their child is to leave school early.)
- ☑ To ensure that emergency contact information for your child is up-to-date.

****Providing Absence Notifications***

This is important for the safety and wellbeing of all students. When a student cannot attend school for any reason, it is expected that the legal guardian will notify Student Reception by 8:30am on the day of absence.

Please notify the College of student absence using one of the methods below:

Parent Portal/BCE Connect: Click on Absence tile

In Person: Verbally or via a hand-written letter by the parent or carer. This may take the form of a Medical Certificate if the child has been absent for multiple days with illness.

▪ Roles and responsibilities Students

- ☑ To attend school for the whole school day, every day and be on time for all timetabled classes.
- ☑ To not leave the College campus during school hours without permission
- ☑ To always report to Student Reception if arriving to school later than 8:35am.
- ☑ To ensure work missed during any periods or days absent from school is completed.
- ☑ To take responsibility for your regular attendance.
- ☑ To ensure days absent are explained by your Legal Guardian.
- ☑ To discuss day(s) absent with your class/Homeroom teacher if either attending regularly or getting your Legal Guardian's notification for an absence is difficult.

▪ **Roles and responsibilities of Staff (General)**

- ☑ To maintain a welcoming, safe and supportive school environment that promotes student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships.
- ☑ To monitor student attendance daily through roll marking at the beginning of Homeroom and each lesson.
- ☑ To notify Legal Guardians of any unexplained absences and late arrivals on a daily basis. This notification is made by SMS to the mobile phone of the student's main contact. If the legal guardian does not respond to the SMS notification, an Administration Officer will contact the legal guardian as follows:
 - Phone the legal guardian and leave a message if the call is unanswered
 - Phone the number 2 legal guardian contact
 - Email the legal guardians if they are unable to be contacted as above
- ☑ To investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate support strategies can be implemented.
- ☑ To discuss individual attendance concerns with the student and/or Legal Guardian, and offer support to Legal Guardian and student when attendance has fallen under expectation.
- ☑ To notify the relevant authorities if efforts to support Legal Guardian and student to improve attendance has been unsuccessful.
- ☑ To ensure the Clairvaux MacKillop College Attendance Policy and Procedures is clearly communicated to all Legal Guardians and students via the College website, Parent Portal, newsletter and enrolment package.

▪ **Attendance and participation – a joint obligation**

- ☑ Attendance reports will be produced regularly by the Student Reception School Officer to provide a summary of overall attendance percentage, absence reasons and late arrivals/early departures.
- ☑ Students will be flagged if their attendance falls below expectation, or a pattern of late arrival, early departure or unexplained absence is emerging.
- ☑ Students and Legal Guardians may be required to attend an interview with a member of the College Leadership Team or the relevant Pastoral Leader if any aspect of attendance (overall percentage, arrival time, unexplained absences) falls below expectation.
- ☑ Cancellation of enrolment at Clairvaux MacKillop College may be considered for students who fall below attendance expectations if a Legal Guardian partnership and commitment to improve attendance cannot be established.

When a student has a **discrepancy** in their attendance or has a **part day absence**, Clairvaux MacKillop College will take the following actions:

- The student will be informed of the discrepancy or part day absence and will report to Student Reception or the relevant Pastoral Leader to explain the discrepancy or absence;
- Where it is necessary for further clarification, the parent or carer will be contacted by the Student Reception School Officer (by email or telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the discrepancy or part day absence (*Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*);
- Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded on eMinerva.

1. Roles and responsibilities of the Homeroom Teacher

When a student is **absent without explanation** for a period of 2 or more days, Clairvaux MacKillop College will take the following actions:

- Upon return the student will be contacted by the Homeroom Teacher to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s and will be asked to provide a response from a parent or carer (note, email, phone call) within two days;
- Where the parent or carer has not contacted the school within two days of a student's return from absence, the parent or carer will be contacted by the Homeroom Teacher (by email or telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s (*Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*);
- Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded in eMinerva (the Homeroom Teacher would pass information about attendance on to the Student Reception Officer for input into eMinerva),

2. When a student is **absent without explanation for 3 or more days** or when a **pattern of absences** has been identified, Clairvaux MacKillop College will take the following actions:

- The parent or carer will be contacted by the Homeroom Teacher or Pastoral Leader (by telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s (*Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*);
- A formal letter outlining attendance requirements and the student's attendance record will be sent home;
- If, after 3 weeks, a student is still not attending school regularly, the Pastoral Leader will follow the processes for managing student absences as outlined in the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 – SMS-PR-043*. This includes the reporting of persistent and/or unexplained absences to the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child Safety;
- Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded in eMinerva.

3. Roles and responsibilities of the Pastoral Leader or Assistant Principal Students

When **truancy** has been identified, Clairvaux MacKillop College will take the following actions:

- Parents will be contacted by the appropriate Pastoral Leader or member of the College Leadership Team to address the student's specific behaviour;
- A student will receive appropriate consequences as governed by Clairvaux MacKillop College's *Student Behaviour and Support Plan*.

4. Where there is prolonged absence due to **illness or medical condition**:

- It is the parent or carer's responsibility to provide a medical certificate for absences from school of 3 days as soon as possible to either the Homeroom Teacher or Pastoral Leader.
- For absences that occur **for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days**, it is the parent or carer's obligation to obtain an *Exemption from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation*.
- In times of prolonged absence due to illness or a medical condition, academic support may be provided appropriate to the student's needs at the time. Students have a responsibility to request and complete any missed work and/or assessments once they have returned to school. Parents can request work from teachers to be completed at home by contacting the Student Reception School Officer.

5. Where **holidays** are scheduled during term time:

- Clairvaux MacKillop College does not support the practice of scheduling holidays during term time and does not consider the taking of a holiday during term time an authorised explanation of absence from school.
- It is the parent or carer's obligation to obtain an *Exemption from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation* for absences that occur **for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days**.

3. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Important note: Class rolls, whether electronic or paper-based, can be required as evidence in court and assist in establishing that a school has met their common-law duty of care to students.

Attendance records are required as part of a school's Workplace Health and Safety requirements and can be a critical factor in identifying serious Student Protection concerns. In addition, student attendance records are used for student reporting, fee allocation and government reporting.

Attendance Marking

- Attendance will be marked in Homeroom each morning before 8.48am by the Homeroom Teacher.
- Student Reception staff will check the morning roll marking of Homeroom Teachers and follow up any unmarked rolls with the relevant teacher.
- Attendance will be marked for each period for all subject classes throughout the duration of the school day by subject teachers.
- Student Reception staff will check roll marking for each period of all subject classes at 2:30pm daily.
- Student Reception staff will advise the Deputy Principal of any rolls marked incorrectly or unmarked.
- An email will be sent to Subject Teachers for any subject rolls not marked.
- Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class.
- Regular reports of outstanding unmarked classes will be produced by the Student Administration School Officer and forwarded to the Deputy Principal.

Present Categories

Students who are on site and:

- Present in class will be marked as '*Present – In Class*';
- Attending an approved in-school activity will be pre-marked as '*Present – Alternate Learning Activity*' by the teacher responsible for the activity;
- With Counsellors will be marked as '*Present – In-School Appointment*';
- In Sick Bay will be marked as '*Present – In Sick Bay*' by Student Reception staff.

Students who are off site* and:

- Attending apprenticeships/traineeships or other approved work experience will be pre-marked as '*Present – Work/Study*' by the Student Pathways Officer;
- Participating in an excursion or camp will be marked as '*Present – Excursion/Camp*' by the teacher responsible for the activity. A marked copy will be taken on the Excursion/Camp. A marked copy will be given to the Student Administration School Officer for entering onto eMinerva for each day of the activity.
- Participating in a school-approved Sport or Arts activity will be marked as '*Present – Sport/Arts*' by the teacher responsible for the activity. A marked copy will be taken on the Sports/Arts Activity. A marked copy will be given to the Student Administration School Officer' for entering onto eMinerva.

* Please refer to activity symbol for detail of the approved activity by hovering over the icon. they are to advise the parent/guardian to record the absence information in the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal.

* Please refer to Activities on page 11 for more detail on Activity roll creation and marking.

Students will only be marked as *'Present – Not Required to Attend'* upon instruction from College Leadership.

Absent Categories

Students who are:

- Not in Class and notification has not been received from a Legal Guardian, will be marked *'Absent – Unexplained'*.
- Not in class and notification has been received from a Legal Guardian to advise the reason for absence will be marked *'Absent'*. The category selected to define the reason for absence will be – *'Illness', 'Appointment' or 'Personal/Family'*.
- If Homeroom Teachers have received information from a Legal Guardian regarding a student's absence from school,
- If a Legal Guardian has informed Student Reception of the absence; the Student Administration School Officer will enter these details into a log in eMinerva.
- Information received regarding future planned absences of students will be entered as a *Notified Absence* into e-Minerva by the Student Administration School Officer.
- If a student is away on three consecutive days (or earlier if concerned) the Homeroom Teacher will contact a Legal Guardian.
- If a student has been previously marked as present at school, but they are not in class, the subject teacher must ring Student Reception and advise that the student is not present. The Student Administration School Officer will inform available staff members (preferably Pastoral Leaders). They will then attempt to locate the student.

*A student will only be marked as *'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension'* upon instruction from College Leadership.

Unexplained Absences

- An *Unexplained Absence* occurs when the student is not present at school and the Legal Guardian does not contact the school.
- An SMS message will be sent to Main Contact/s by approximately 10:00am each day. A Student Reception Officer will follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's Legal Guardians.
- Past unexplained absences are indicated by the red Unexplained Absence Alert icon on class rolls. If the Homeroom Teachers receive written explanation of the absence from the student's Legal Guardians they are to advise the parent/guardian to record the absence information in the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal.

Late Arrivals

- A student is considered to have *Arrived Late* any time after 8:35am.
- A student arriving late will sign in at Student Reception. If they are signing in during a busy time they might not be issued a late slip; however, the information will be available in eMinerva. If a student signs in during the school day (other than homeroom time) they will be issued a late slip and should present it to the classroom teacher on arrival to class.
- Legal Guardians are required to provide an explanation for the late arrival via the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal. Students arriving late without Legal Guardian notification will be marked *'Absent – Unexplained'* for the period before their arrival at school.

- If Homeroom Teachers observe a student has made a habit of arriving late or is late for three consecutive days, they will contact the student's Legal Guardian as per the policy for absentee students in this document.
- An SMS message will be sent to the student's main contact/s advising the student has arrived late to school.

Early Departures

- A student is considered to be leaving early any time before 2:54pm.
- All students leaving early will provide a notification from a Legal Guardian via the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal
- If Student Reception staff are unsure of the validity of the notification, a call will be made to the student's main contact to confirm.
- Students in all classes Year 7 – Year 10 also require the Legal Guardian or Legal Guardian approved delegate to attend Student Reception in order to sign the student out. This is to fulfil duty of care obligations.
- Students in Year 11 and 12 are to advise their Pastoral Leader of an early departure and the reasons why.

Exam Blocks

Students from Year 11 and Year 12 will only be at school for required exams throughout scheduled exam blocks. Students may have home study time when not attending for an exam or outstanding / incomplete assessment. Students should not be sighted in public areas (e.g. shopping centres) unless with their parent/guardian during school hours for this block period. Throughout assessment block – this means that all assessment including exams, modules and assignments are required to be up to date and be completed as directed by the teacher and assessment schedules.

Absence from Examinations

A student in Years 7-10 who is absent from an examination due to illness or injury must notify the subject teacher or Curriculum Leader on or before the day of the examination and present a doctor's certificate to the subject teacher on the first day of his/her return to College to arrange the completion of that examination.

A student in Year 11 or 12 who is absent from an examination due to illness or exceptional circumstances must notify the Assistant Principal: Curriculum and relevant Curriculum Leader on the day of the exam or prior to the exam if it is an on-going medical condition. Students must present a Medical Certificate or other documentation along with an AARA application to the Assistant Principal – Curriculum on their return to school and make arrangements with Curriculum Leader for an alternate date to complete the exam. This is to be at the first possible opportunity.

The Curriculum Leader or Assistant Principal – Curriculum will contact parents/carers on the day of the exam if no prior communication is made.

Absence from Examinations Known in Advance

Students in Years 11 and 12 are not eligible for AARA if circumstances are within their or their family's control.

Students in Years 7 to 10 should not ask to change exam schedules to accommodate family holiday arrangements. Where an absence from an examination is foreseeable, parents are to

contact the Principal in writing (email is preferred) so that a fair and reasonable arrangement may be made concerning the student sitting the examination. Students must obtain and complete an AARA application.

Students in Years 7 to 10 who need to complete their exam following the set date will be required to:

- Complete their exam on the first available time upon returning to the College
- Complete the exam during class time, or
- Complete the exam through other arrangements, such as a separate, supervised room. This decision would involve discussion between the Subject Teacher/s and the relevant Curriculum Leader/s, and the Assistant Principal – Curriculum where needed.

Students in Years 11 and 12 who are eligible for AARA will be required to

- Complete the assessment at the approved time and date
- Complete a comparable piece of assessment if necessary to ensure integrity of the piece is maintained

Students in Years 11 and 12 who are not eligible for AARA will be required to

- Complete the assessment piece prior leaving
- Complete a comparable piece of assessment if necessary to ensure integrity of the piece is maintained

SMS Messages

Unexplained Absences:

- An SMS message will be sent to a student's main contact/s by 10:00am each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences.

Late Arrivals:

- An SMS message will be sent to a student's main contact/s advising of students who have arrived late.

Incorrect SMS messages:

- Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to the Deputy Principal.

Non-Marking of Electronic Roll

- If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all Homeroom rolls will be provided by Student Reception. Subject rolls will be taken by completing a list of students present in class. Teachers must sign and date this hard copy document. Once the system is online, teachers will mark the roll in eMinerva using their hard copy roll. If this cannot be completed due to time constraints, teachers can send the roll to Student Reception for prompt entry. If the data is entered by Student Reception, the signed and dated hard copy will be required to be archived.
- In the event of an evacuation, hard copies of rolls will be taken to the evacuation area by Student Reception to be marked by Homeroom Teachers. Homeroom Teachers will advise any unexplained absentees. These are to be signed and dated by the teacher taking the roll.

- During a lockdown, the roll will not be marked; however, teachers will need to account for students and reports names of any missing students as per approved lockdown procedures.

Activities

- An activity will be entered into eMinerva for students attending excursions, camps and other school based activities.
- A yellow alert will appear next to the student's name on class rolls to indicate the student has a timetable clash. The activity will be marked by the staff member responsible for the event, eg. '*Present – Work Study*'; '*Present – Excursion*'. This attendance category will inherit through the rest of the student's timetable for the day.
- Throughout the day these attendance categories must not be changed, unless the student is present in class. The category should then be changed to '*Present – In Class*'.

Relief Staff

- Relief staff will have access to the school portal and eMinerva using their own BCE Username and Password, and are to mark attendance in eMinerva for each class they are supervising. If this is not possible, paper rolls will be provided, marked, signed and dated by relief staff and returned promptly to Student Reception for electronic entry. Paper rolls are then required to be archived for legal record keeping purposes.
- College staff conducting a cover lesson (lesson supervision) will mark attendance in eMinerva for the class they are supervising.

Mobile Attendance Application

- Teaching staff wishing to use the Mobile Attendance application can access it by using the URL <https://staffportal.bne.catholic.edu.au/mawa> and entering their BCE Username and Password.
- The Mobile Attendance Application can also be accessed via the Staff Portal.
- The *User Guide – Mobile Attendance Application* should be read prior to use.

Attendance Marking Training

- School Leadership will ensure all staff receive a copy of the Attendance Policy document and will review this document annually.
- A copy of the Attendance Policy document will be included in Relief staff folders.
- School Leadership will provide attendance marking training to teaching staff annually.

4. PERFORMANCE

The College will perform high-level check of this procedure annually and a detailed review at least every two years.

5. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

Definition of Unexplained Absence	An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the legal guardian does not contact the College.
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BCE Student Attendance Policy - Approved 4 September 2019

<https://kweb.bne.catholic.edu.au/policiesandforms/ResourceStore/Information%20Services/Student%20Attendance%20Policy.pdf>

BCE Guidelines to Improve Student Attendance

<https://kweb.bne.catholic.edu.au/policiesandforms/ResourceStore/Learning%20and%20Teaching/BCE%20Attendance%20Guidelines.doc>

ACARA National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting

<http://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-standards-for-student-attendance-data-reporting>

Every Day Counts

<http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/>

Every Day Counts – Videos

- *Every Day Counts:*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkm9ae2xKT4&list=PLgfv5epyrnQDLNMTmhLA6z-cssQylcsvN&index=4>
- *Attendance – It All Adds Up:*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etLaUa6cHxs&index=2&list=PLgfv5epyrnQDLNMTmhLA6z-cssQylcsvN>
- *Attending Every Day:*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VniGVhJb-SM&index=3&list=PLgfv5epyrnQDLNMTmhLA6z-cssQylcsvN>