



All Saints
Grammar

Student Attendance Policy

2024

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Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to achieve their potential. All Saints Grammar, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as a part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents must ensure:

- Their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or registered non-government school.
- Their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open for their instruction.
- They provide an explanation for absences via the Sentral Portal App.
- They work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school

Arriving at school and class on time

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

Responsibilities of Head of School

To effectively implement the school attendance policy Head of Schools must ensure:

- All attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible
- All cases of unsatisfactory attendance, including part day absences are investigated promptly and school-based factors impacting on attendance are addressed.
- Parents, students and the school community are regularly informed of the importance of school and attendance requirements.
- Effective referral and support networks are established so that students whose attendance is identified as being of concern and their families can be connected to relevant services
- Any other child protection concerns underlying school attendance issues (including educational neglect) are managed
- Consideration is given to the Mandatory Reporter Guide, specialist advice and professional judgement, where there are concerns about suspected risk of harm.

Responsibilities of Teachers

Teachers are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:

- Providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- Maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- Providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

When to Contact Parents

- The Roll Call/Homeroom Teacher will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents following 2 consecutive days of absence where parents have not contacted the school
- If within 7 days of the first day of any period of absence an explanation has not been received
- Where frequent absences are explained as being due to illness consultation with parents must occur regarding the health care needs of the child.

Unsatisfactory Attendance

Parents are responsible for the regular attendance of students at school. The Wellbeing Facilitators and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents will

usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act (1990) the benefits of attending school regularly should be the focus of this consultation.

A child is considered to have an unsatisfactory school attendance when they have:

- regular absences without explanation
- regular partial absences
- extended periods of absence without an explanation or the explanation is not accepted by the Head of School.

The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents. Students may also be referred to the School Counsellor.

All documentation regarding unsatisfactory attendance and the measures taken to address these concerns is kept in the student files.

School Refusal

You should contact the Head of School as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The Head of School may seek further support from the Wellbeing Team/Homeroom Mentor/Class Teacher or School Counsellor.

Record Keeping for School Attendance

- Sentral notifications and written notes from parents will be retained for two years from the date of receipt
- in secondary schools, a record of the attendance at each lesson, to be retained until the end of the school year
- information detailing a student's absences each year, kept on the student's file until seven years after the student has left
- records for Certificates of Exemptions from attendance and enrolment must be kept consistent with the requirements of the Exemption from School - Procedures
- The Head of School or delegate will ensure that explanations for absences are recorded within 7 days of the occurrence of the absence. Explanations that have been accepted by the Head of School which are provided after the 7 day period should be retained
- School attendance must be recorded on the attendance register (roll) at the commencement of the school day
- Attendance registers (rolls) must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood
- In the secondary school, attendance is also recorded each period or lesson. In the primary school attendance is recorded in the home classroom
- In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant attendance register codes

Attendance Registers

The *Education Act 1990* (Section 24) requires that attendance registers (rolls) be maintained in a form approved by the Minister. These may be manual (interim and transferrable in cases of system failure), while ultimate storage is done as electronic rolls (permanent records).

- Attendance registers must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.
- The exception method (marking absences only) is to be followed by all teachers.
- School attendance must be electronically recorded daily at the beginning of the school day.
- Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school must not be marked as absent.
- By 10:30am names of students absent will appear on 'Daily Absentees', a printout, pinned up in Staffroom Common Area and a copy also passed on to the Leader of Student Wellbeing Secondary.
- An **SMS alert** will be sent to parents' mobile phones to notify of absence, with provision for return message to act as explanation.

NOTE: Only the codes approved by the Minister and showing in SENTRAL are to be used.

School Sport Rolls

- School sport is an integral part of the curriculum. The Head of Campus must ensure adequate attendance monitoring practices at school sport to ensure the safety of students.
- Sports rolls must be marked at the beginning and conclusion of each sports session.

Special Circumstances

Attendance registers must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:

- Days on which there is part or full day industrial action involving teachers
- Approved school development days
- Days on which the school is inaccessible due to natural occurrences such as fire or flood
- Electronic attendance registers will automatically display a 'school development day' message on school development days. A similar notation must be made on hard copies of electronic attendance registers regarding other reasons for maintaining a special circumstance register (eg industrial action or school closure due to fire or flood)
- Absences on these days are not to be recorded on student record cards or counted as absences for statistical purposes
- Due to emergencies (fire) or severe natural occurrences (flooding)

Security of Attendance Registers

- Registers must be stored in a secure location within the school
- They must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire, flood or court order
- Teachers must not take attendance registers home
- At the end of each school year the Head of School must ensure that the attendance register and attached special circumstance registers are preserved as a complete record of students' absences for that year
- Attendance registers are **archived**.

Students who are suspended from School

- The appropriate symbol for suspension is to be used to denote the absences of students whilst on suspension. This symbol is to be used only for the duration of the suspension and must not be applied to students who fail to return to school following the suspension period.
- The absences of students who are suspended are counted as absences for statistical purposes.
- Suspension is regarded as an explained absence, with a note made to indicate the nature of the concern.

Electronic Attendance using SENTRAL and Roll Call Procedures

The school's computerised administration system SENTRAL will be used to record student attendance.

- There will be 1 teacher assigned for each roll group. In the event of a teacher being absent, the teacher who shares the roll group or another assigned teacher will submit the roll in SENTRAL.
- Teachers will be required to log-on the school Intranet. Absences are required to be entered electronically after signing in to SENTRAL.
- Teachers may use a hard copy of the student roll for personal use. This can be stored in the teacher's respective roll tray.
- Students who arrive late during roll call will have a late note from the Front Office. The student is to be recorded as absent. The Admin Staff will amend any student lateness in SENTRAL.
- Teachers or Admin Staff will be required to collect any student absent notes (or signed late notes) and place them in their class folder which is archived at the end of each semester.
- The Admin Staff will provide a hard copy of student absences for any given day. Teachers can view the

student absences as these will be posted on the notice board in the Staff Area.

- The Admin Staff will store all attendance/absent records of students.
- Where an alteration is necessary the electronic record is amended in SENTRAL.
- Roll Call teachers are to undertake weekly roll checks to monitor unexplained absences and encourage explanations. Methods available to parents include:
 - i. Response to SMS alert or Sentral notification
 - ii. 'Absentee Note' proforma
 - iii. Hand-written letter/diary note
 - iv. Email
- In the event the network or computer is inoperable, teachers will use a hard copy of the student roll and return it to the Front Office. In this instance, the administration staff will be responsible for entering the attendance data electronically.

Class Rolls

Teachers have two responsibilities when checking class rolls.

Firstly, to ensure the class roll and the SENTRAL class roll are accurate. SENTRAL class rolls contain the information from school administration records. This is used for reports and NESA entries. Student names, especially spelling is accurate in Maze records. Should there be additional or missing students in your class list they should be checked with the Administration Coordinator.

Secondly, to keep an accurate roll of student attendance for each period (Secondary).

Note:

- i. No student should be changed from one class to another or one subject to another until the official 'Change of Course' form has been completed by all

staff responsible, signed off by the Head of Academic Innovation and the final approval given by the Head of School.

Monitoring Truantiing Students

During Period 1 and 2 a copy of absent students for the day will be placed on the Staff Notice Board. If a student is absent from your class and not listed on the Absentee Sheet you should check for obvious reasons for absence such as attendance at excursions. Truantiing students should be recorded on SENTRAL and forwarded to the Wellbeing Facilitator immediately. Completion of Movement Log will eliminate any suspicion of truancy and communicate clearly student whereabouts at all times.

Exemptions from Attendance and Enrolment

Section 25 of the Education Act (1990) gives the Minister specific powers related to certificates of exemption to the parents of children of compulsory school age from the requirements that they be enrolled at and attend a government school (or registered non-government school or be registered for and receive home schooling).

There are two types of exemptions:

1. Exemptions from Attending School and
2. Exemption from Enrolling in School (Appendix 8 - Application)

The Head of School may grant an exemption from School attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student. The Head of School cannot delegate this authority to any other teacher. Parents or caregivers who wish to apply for an exemption for attendance at school for their child, must request a form from the School Administration Office and return the completed form to the Head of School within a week of the requested date for exemption.

For the purpose of our School, the exemption for attending School due to exceptional circumstances, employment in the entertainment industry, participation in an elite sporting activity or Direction under Section 42 D of the Public Health Act 1991, requires the parents to complete an 'Application for Exemption for Attendance at School'. Once these reasons have been approved by the Head of School, a 'Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School' must be issued to the parent or caregiver.

The Head of School may grant **full day** exemptions from attendance at School for the following reasons:

- exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
- the child being prevented from attending school because of a Head of School's direction under the Public Health Act 2010. (Note that in the case of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School is required to advise an unvaccinated student not to attend until advised to do so. The parent or caregiver is not required to complete an application for exemption)
- employment in the entertainment industry
- participation in elite arts or elite sporting events (i.e. national/international sports events, elite programs run by national and international organisations, talent identification programs run by NSW Dept. Sport and Recreation)

For any other matter not covered by the above points, the Head of School will consult the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation.

The School roll is marked 'M' for the period of the exemption from attendance and this is not included in the School's absence reporting.

Schools are to retain copies of all documentation relating to the exemption in the student's file until the student reaches the age of 25, or for 7 years, whichever is greater, and then destroyed.

A Certificate of Exemption will not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with a child

protection report to Family and Community Services and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm.

Partial Day Exemptions

The Head of School may grant **part day** exemptions from attendance at School for the following reasons:

- students participating in elite arts or elite sporting programs who are required to attend regular
- activities/training during school time
- due to the requirements of a health care plan
- students participating in School programs.

Parents and caregivers must make an application by completing an 'Application for Exemption from Attendance' form. This must be made in writing and in advance. Parents and caregivers may seek assistance from the Head of School when completing this form.

The attendance register must indicate part day exemptions with the code Pa/M.

Where the application is not supported, the Head of School will notify the parents in writing of the unsuccessful outcome.

An application for exemption from attendance for a total of 100 days or more in a twelve-month period will be considered for recommendation by the Head of School, who will send it to the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation for further referral to the Minister's delegate in the NSW Department of Education.

The Head of School or their delegate will keep copies of applications, exemption certificates, notifications or letters resulting from applications for exemption from attendance in the student's file.

In cases of exemption from enrolment for completion of education under special circumstances (through apprenticeship or traineeship) for a student who has not completed Year 9, or an exemption from enrolment due to

circumstances including a delayed start to school, health, learning or social disadvantage:

- The Head of School will consider applications for recommendation, and will send applications to the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation, for further referral to the Minister's delegate in the NSW Department of Education.

In the case of exemption from enrolment for completion of education under special circumstances in any other cases, including where there is no apprenticeship or traineeship:

- The Head of School will consider the application for recommendation and will mail the appropriate NESA form (Application to complete education under special circumstances other than an apprenticeship or traineeship) to NESA at the address noted on that form.

In all cases, copies of applications, exemption certificates, notifications or letters resulting from applications for exemption from enrolment will be kept in the student's file. Copies of relevant documentation, including the Minister's delegation and exemption certificate, should also be retained in the school files/enrolment records.

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Reviewed: 2014; 2019; 2021, 2023, 2024

Printed names:

Chairperson: Board of Directors

Signature

Date



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