



Attendance Policy and Guidelines

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1 RATIONALE

The College's attendance policy and procedures make provision for monitoring the attendance of all enrolled students, identification of students with attendance issues and implementation of appropriate measures to restore regular attendance. The parents of a child who is enrolled in a school are responsible under the School Education Act (1999) for ensuring their child is attending school on a daily basis. Parents/guardians will be asked to provide an acceptable explanation for any absence to the College, usually through the classroom teacher or College Office. The absentee procedure should reflect the effective and professional nature of the College.

2 SCOPE

The College's attendance policy applies to all staff, students and parents of Foundation Christian College.

3 POLICY

The College will maintain accurate records of student attendance in accordance with the School Education Act (1999).

4 GUIDELINES

In implementing this policy, the intent of the College ethos and purpose must be evident. The College strives to effectively and correctly record student absentees and follow up on reasons for student absentees in a timely manner. The following process is being used to manage student absences from the College on a daily basis.

4.1 Procedures

Student attendance is taken by the classroom teacher and recorded on SEQTA. If a student is absent, a note of explanation (with date) from a parent is required.

In the Primary School, the classroom teacher will keep these notes in their class file. These files will then be given to the administration staff member responsible for attendance to reconcile student absences.

In the Secondary School, these notes will be placed in the red box in Mrs Lindley's office (Middle School) or in the common room (Senior School). These boxes will be emptied and passed onto the administration staff member responsible for attendance to reconcile student absences.

In the case of unreconciled absences, parents will be contacted in writing by the College to provide a written explanation for the absence.

4.1.1 Lateness to School

School begins at 8.30am each day. Students should arrive at school between 8.15am and 8.25am. This allows students to prepare for the school day. If a student arrives late to school they should report to the front office for a late note. A note of explanation (with date) from a parent is required to be given to the Home Class teacher the following day.

4.1.2 Lateness to Class

If a student is more than 5 minutes late to their class, they will be marked as being 'late' in SEQTA. If a student is consistently late to class, their parent will be contacted and disciplinary action may take place.

4.1.3 Students leaving early

Appointments during school time should be avoided; however, we appreciate that some specialist medical appointments may need to be scheduled during school hours.

In the case of Primary and Middle School students, parents/guardians must sign the Early Release Form before collecting the student from their class.

In the case of Senior school students, students must have a note from a parent or guardian requesting to leave school at a specific time. Students (or their parents) must sign out at Reception.

4.1.4 Students who are sick

When students say they feel sick, ascertain if they are sick, if possible. Try a drink of water, toilet break or a "take it easy" approach. If more action is required, send the student to the office with a brief note. Please do not ask the Office staff to phone parents to collect a student. All students needing to go home need Principal or Head of School endorsement.

4.1.5 SEQTA Teachers Assistant

All classroom teachers and administration use SEQTA, an online computer program to record daily absentees.

- Absences are recorded in SEQTA at least twice a day at 8:30 am and 1:15 pm. This is part of Regulation 9 of the Education Act.

- Teachers click in the box a tick for present, a cross for absent or a tick with an L if the Late hasn't already been entered by administration. If a teacher cannot click into a student's box, this means that administration has already entered their absence.
- If teachers are advised verbally by a parent or guardian, or have a written explanation for a student that will be absent, prior to the day, the notification is sent to the College office for administration to enter in SEQTA. Once received, this note will then be entered into SEQTA by administration for the teacher to read.
- If teachers are handed any notes, or notes written into students' diaries resolving absentee queries then they must be given to the administration daily to record these in SEQTA.
- Public Holidays and Students Free Days are already indicated on the SEQTA system
- Students who have left the College will not be removed from the SEQTA timetable until a transfer note has been received from their new school. When a transfer note has been received, the registrar will remove the student from the class list.
- The attendance record as maintained on SEQTA is a permanent record.

4.1.6 Absent Students

- Parents of absent students are contacted via phone calls or SMS messages to obtain a reason for why the student is absent.
- Parents of students with unresolved absences will be sent a letter via mail to respond to with a reason why their child was absent for the period in question.
- On the rare occasion a student may be recorded absent and is later found to be present. The following situations may occur and will be remedied as follows:
 - A student arrives at the College after 8:30 am but goes straight to class without collecting a late note from the Office. The student will already be marked absent on SEQTA, thus the class teacher will send the student up to the office for a late note to be recorded.
 - A student is marked absent by mistake. Administration staff will check with the classroom teacher and make necessary changes to SEQTA.
 - A student is genuinely missing, in which case the Principal or Head of School is notified for immediate follow up.
- In the case of extended absence from school for short-term or long-term holidays, a letter is to be forwarded to the parents of the student/s stating the Education Act 1999 requirements for schooling.

4.1.7 Missing Students

Students who become absent and whose family cannot be contacted after a reasonable period of time (4 weeks) will be recorded as 'missing' students and will be reported to the Student Tracking Coordinator (STC) in the Department of Education.

4.1.8 Compulsory College Events

Attendance at school each day during the mandated term dates is compulsory, irrespective of the subject or activity. Each of the eight key learning areas is a necessary and important element in the Curriculum and parents, upon enrolment, agree to support the teaching and learning programmes developed by the College. Parents do not have the option of withdrawing their child from subjects which, in their eyes, may be less important or unnecessary. Parents who would wish to exercise this option would be asked to reconsider their enrolment in the College.

There are a number of activities which in the course of the year contribute to ethos and overall delivery of both the overt and hidden curriculum of the College. These include the following:

- Class excursions
- Year level camps
- House Swimming Carnival
- House Athletics Carnival
- Annual Awards Night
- Year 10 Work Place Learning

It should be noted that whilst the College will always inform parents and students of the details of these events, permission will not be sought, as that permission has already been given at enrolment. At this time, parents sign the enrolment form which advises that all curricula activities are deemed to be an important and necessary part of the College programme to which they agree. Likewise, permission will not be sought for students to access College arranged transport when travelling to events as this is a part of the organisation associated with many activities. The College will advise parents via newsletter and other forms of communication when these events are scheduled as a reminder of the arrangements.

Failure to participate in these activities without a medical certificate or a valid and justifiable reason will result in parents being contacted and advised that a further failure to support the other programmes in any one year will result in the enrolment being reviewed.