

Student Attendance Guidelines



**Santa
Sabina
College**

1.0 Rationale

- 1.1 Santa Sabina College, a Catholic School in the Dominican tradition supports regular school attendance as an essential requirement for students to maximise their potential. The College, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting regular attendance of our students, in order to meet both duty of care and legislative requirements according to the *Education Act 1990* and maintain the safety and wellbeing of students.

2.0 Responsibilities:

- 2.1 The College Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring the attendance records are maintained in the approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- approving exemption leave from school including:
 - grant sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness
 - grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student providing certain conditions are met
 - accept other explanations of absence
 - decline to accept as satisfactory an explanation for an absence, or a proposed absence

- 2.2 The Admissions Manager is responsible for:

- maintaining a register of enrolments that includes the following information for each student name, age and address
- the name and contact telephone number of parent/carer date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
- for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
- where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that a Department of Education and Communities officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student.

2.3 The Records & Archive Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring the register of enrolments is retained for a minimum period of five (5) years before archiving
- ensuring the register of daily attendances is retained for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made

2.4 The Head of Primary Campus and Gioia House and Dean of Pastoral Care are responsible for:

- transferring unsatisfactory attendance information to student records
- regularly evaluating and addressing school attendance
- ensuring open communication on issues affecting students' attendance is promoted with parents
- working with Teachers, Heads of House and School Counsellors/Psychologists in developing a School Based Attendance Improvement Plan (SBAIP) for any student who is not displaying regular attendance
- implementing effective strategies to contact families when there is a pattern of attendance causing concern or the family has failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence. The following process is to be followed:
 - Head of Campus or Dean of Pastoral Care to send a registered letter home requesting the attendance of the family at a School Based Attendance Improvement Plan (SBAIP) meeting
 - If there is no engagement from the family a Mandatory Report is submitted
- ensuring school staff are trained to implement attendance policies and procedures
- informing staff each year on the marking requirements and to induct any new staff to the College in roll marking
- endorsing the official roll records at regular intervals throughout the year

2.5 The Deputy Principal Mission and Pastoral Care P-12 is responsible for:

- overseeing the effective fulfillment of recording requirements for attendance
- overseeing the effective monitoring of consistent attendance
- reviewing and considering applications for leave and if appropriate approving the leave

2.6 The Heads of House and Assistant Heads of House are responsible for:

- approving student leave for part of the school day
- investigating and addressing any incidents of unexplained absence
- monitoring patterns of consistent absence of students. Generate a report from our data on a weekly basis to assist with this monitoring
- discussing patterns of student absence with Homeroom teachers on a regular basis and developing appropriate strategies to deal with identified issues
- notifying families of poor school or class attendance
- developing a School Based Attendance Improvement Plan (SBAIP) in collaboration with the Head of Primary and Gioia House and the Dean of Pastoral Care for any student who is not displaying regular attendance. Concern may be triggered by unexplained absences, regular absences or absences that tally to more than 10 days in a given school term

2.7 Homeroom Teachers are responsible for:

- maintaining an accurate daily record of attendance of students in their Homeroom class
- monitoring each student's pattern of attendance in their homeroom class
- contacting parents when a student has been absent for three consecutive days
- discussing patterns of student absence with the Head of House and Dean of Pastoral Care and developing strategies to deal with identified issues
- obtaining parental explanation for any unexplained absences. If absence is still unexplained after seven (7) days it is marked as an unexplained absence

2.8 Primary Teachers (P-4) and Gioia House Core Teachers are responsible for:

- approving student leave for part of the school day
- investigating any incidents of unexplained absence monitoring patterns of consistent absence of students
- contacting parents when a student has been absent for three consecutive days
- discussing patterns of student absence with Assistant Head - Primary or Head of Gioia House on a regular basis and developing appropriate strategies to deal with identified issues
- notifying families of poor school or class attendance

- developing a school based attendance improvement plan (SBAIP) in collaboration with the Assistant Head of Primary P-4 or Head of Gioia House

2.9 Subject Teachers (Years 7 – 12) are responsible for:

- recording student absences from each of their classes in period by period roll marking
- approving student leave from part or all of any particular class, if required.

2.10 Student Services is responsible for:

- ensuring that class rolls have been completed in the student management system
- recording student absences explained by families. Otherwise the student is marked as an unexplained absence in accordance with the school attendance register codes. (*Refer to attached Related Document: Attendance Register Codes*)
- overseeing students who arrive late or need to leave early. If a student does not have a note to leave early and have not seen the Head of House, the administrative support staff may phone the parents in order to clarify the situation and then record the response and reason for departure
- sending an SMS to the families of students who are absent
- checking that period by period rolls (7-12) are being completed and reporting any unexplained absences to Head of House and Assistant Head of House

2.11 All students are responsible for:

- remaining within the boundaries of the school property on arrival at school. With the exception of leave approved by a Head of House or College Leadership Team, no student shall leave the school premises before the end of the school day
- signing in at Student Services if they arrive late
- signing out at Student Services if they need to leave during the day.

2.12 Families are responsible for:

- ensuring that their child/ren attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- contacting the College if the student arrives late to school and needs to leave early via attendance@ssc.nsw.edu.au

- requesting leave from school for their child for any period of time for reasons other than illness. This application form is located on the College website. Leave from school is approved by the Deputy Principal Mission and Pastoral Care and can only be approved if the application meets the exemptions stipulated by the *Education Act 1990, No.8*
- participating and engaging in actions/process/meetings that are used to help maintain or improve regular attendance of their child and address issues of non-attendance
- providing an explanation of their child's absence from school to the College within seven (7) days from the first day of any period of absence. If an absence is still unexplained after seven (7) days, it is marked as an unexplained absence.

3.0 Related Document: Attendance Register Codes

Absence Code	Symbol Meaning
A	The student absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the College Principal. It is at the College Principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the College Principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work experience • school sport (regional or state carnivals) • school excursions • student exchange
E	The student was suspended from the College.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSC Pathways • Trial or HSC examinations • VET courses
H	The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviour needs • Hospital schools • Distance Education
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the College Principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misadventure or unforeseen event • participation in special events not related to the school • domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member • attendance at a funeral • travel in Australia and overseas • recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions Less than five (5) days requires permission from the College Principal; and five (5) or more days requires a separate Application for Approval for Leave. Completed and signed forms and supporting documentation must be submitted 14 days prior to the extended leave commencement date.
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by the College Principal or Head of Primary or Head of Gioia House
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the Principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.

4.0 Approval and Review

Authorised by: College Principal
Authorisation date: July 2024
Policy implementation date: August 2024
Version: 3
Policy Identifier: 208.03
Next Review Date: Every two years (October 2026) or as determined by the College Principal
Notes: <i>Point 2.2 - title change College Registrar to Admission Manager. Point 2.3 - title change Records Manager to Records & Archive Manager</i>