

Related Policies

St Clare's College:

Pastoral Care

Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn:

Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting ACT

Critical Incident Response

Medical Welfare of Students

Attendance at School – ACT

Changing the Name of a Student

Overseas Students

Work Experience/Work Placement

Record Keeping

Confidentiality

Privacy

Rationale/Purpose

This policy serves to assist St Clare's College and parents to meet their obligations under the Education Act 2004 and associated amendments. These obligations include:

- Parents of a child who lives in the ACT, is of compulsory school age (until the child completes Year 12 or the child is 17 years old) and who is enrolled at a school must ensure that the child attends every day and during the times every day when the school is open and attends every activity that the school requires the child to attend.
- The Principal of a non-government school must set up procedures to encourage students to attend school regularly and to help parents to encourage their children to attend school regularly.
- The Principal must refer parents and children to support services that encourage children to attend regularly if they are unsuccessful in achieving regular attendance. If a child has not been attending regularly the Principal may by written notice require the student's parents and the student to meet with an authorised person (non-government).
- To clarify the responsibilities of St Clare's College in encouraging attendance, reporting and dealing with absenteeism as determined in the *Education Act 2004*(the Act)
- To ensure that attendance data is credible and accurate.

Attendance records may be required as proof of a student's enrolment and attendance for a variety of purposes, such as eligibility for Youth Allowance or matters being dealt with by the Family Law Court.

Definitions

Approval Statements

This is a formal statement issued by the Chief Executive permitting a child or young person to engage in specific employment or training for a defined period.

Attendance Records

Any and all hard copy documents or electronic records, which in some way record both the attendance and non-attendance of a child at school, scheduled sessions at the school and/or an approved educational course.

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.

The System's record keeping system

The computer application and database used in the System to record details of student enrolments and related matters.

Parent

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

Strict Liability Offence

An offence that does not require proof of negligence or intent. It applies irrespective of a person taking reasonable care.

Student

A person who is enrolled as a student in a school in accordance with section 100 of the ACT.

Policy

This policy outlines the responsibilities of St Clare's College and the responsibilities of parents regarding student enrolment and attendance.

Procedures

Enrolment Procedures and Records

- At the time of enrolment of the child, proof of residency, in the form of an electricity account, tenancy agreement, current driver's licence or similar, must be shown to the Principal of the school, or the Principal's delegate. Proof of age and identity (e.g. a birth certificate or passport, immunization records and Baptismal Certificate) must also be shown to the Principal, or the Principal's delegate, at the time of enrolment.
- Parents/carers will be asked to update student residential data at the beginning of each year. Student *Indemnity and Medical Forms* are distributed annually to all students in order to maintain currency of relevant information. This information is then recorded electronically by the relevant Support Staff member as soon as it is received.
- In order to maintain accurate student records it includes information with respect to: changes in the student's or parent or guardian's residence, parent access, parent home and work contact numbers, student's medical status,
- permission to publish student photographs in College publications and the College Website
- Year 7 enrolment applications are processed within the College and then the data for cross checking applications across the ACT Catholic system is provided to the Catholic Education Office for cross-checking with other Catholic Colleges prior to offers of placement being made to families. Priority is given to baptised Catholic students in Catholic primary schools within the priority enrolment zone and to siblings. Applications for students from outside the priority enrolment zone, from interstate or from government primary schools are considered if there are places available. Generally, these students are interviewed prior to an offer being made.
- Enrolments in Years 8 to 12 are considered according to the availability of places in particular year groups. Usually any student enrolling in Years 8 to 12 would be interviewed prior to the offer of a place.
- If we are made aware that a student applying for a place has a special learning need or a physical disability, the Learning Support Officer at the Catholic Education Office will be contacted by the Coordinator of the Student Support Team and an interview will be arranged with the Principal, the Catholic Education Office Officer, the SST Coordinator and the Principal prior to an offer being made. The purpose of this interview is to ensure that the College and the family are in agreement about the level of educational support or physical modifications to College facilities that can be provided to meet the particular needs of the student.
- Enrolment forms are available on request from the College.
- There is no automatic transfer of enrolments from Catholic Primary Schools.
- Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in any year group, a Waiting List will be established.
- The College does not actively seek the enrolment of overseas students but it does accept such students occasionally. The offer of a place to any overseas student is made



following the guidelines set by the Catholic Education Office and government regulations in relation to visas and the payment of fees.

Unique Identification Numbers

- All Schools will be allocated a block of unique identification numbers (ID numbers). These ID numbers must be used by the school when enrolling a child.
- The unique identification number will also be used when a child is provisionally registered or registered for home education.
- This identifying number will remain the same throughout the child's education in the ACT even when the child changes schools, moves between the government and non-government sectors or is home educated at any point.

Keeping of registers and records of enrolments and attendances

- The Act provides for the keeping of registers and records of enrolment in schools and attendance at school in sections 99 and 100. Section 100 (1) (b) of the Act requires that a record of the attendance or non-attendance of a student must be kept for every day when the school is open for attendance.
- Attendance records must clearly show whether the child was present and if not, the reason for the absence in all cases.

Entering of data in registers of enrolment and records of attendance

- Enrolment information should be entered directly onto the System's record keeping system by the school. The Catholic Education Office has access to each school's data.
- A central register of enrolment and attendance is kept by the Directorate
- The College will use an electronic roll keeping system to enter and store attendance data. Daily attendance data will be uploaded from the attendance package into the school's administration database. Each day new student data will be uploaded into the attendance package.
- In order to maintain accurate records and monitor the daily attendance of students staff are obliged to follow the school processes regarding student absence, lateness, leave and roll marking. These processes are outlined on the SEQTA homepage – Marking attendance in SEQTA.

In the event of a student absence:

- A letter (from parent or carer) explaining the reason for the absence must be submitted to the Student Administration Officer on the day the student returns to school. It is the responsibility of the student to submit all permission and absence notes directly to Student Administration. These are to be placed in the Year appropriate drop-box.
- If a student is to be absent for longer than one week parents are expected to contact the Principal in advance either by email or letter. The Principal's PA will then advise the appropriate College personnel including the Student Administration Officer and the student's teachers.



- If the school has not received a text of a student absence prior to the day on which they are absent a text message is sent to the parent or guardian's nominated mobile telephone.

If a student arrives late she is to:

- Sign into the attendance system using the self-serve station at Student Administration.
- If the student has a note to explain the absence she will then immediately pass the note to the Student Administration Officer.

Name under which a child is enrolled

- The entry of enrolment on the school's record keeping system must indicate the birth certificate name of the student. This is the name under which the student is officially enrolled
- If, however, one of the following conditions apply, a Principal can enrol students under an alternative name or change existing records to indicate the new name:
 - A signed consent from both parents, indicating approval to use the new name, is provided
 - A court order is provided authorizing 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. This can take the form of a statutory declaration by the enrolling parent or a death certificate
 - Proof of adoption
 - A birth certificate issued in the new name
- Where one of the above conditions cannot be met, no change of name is to be made and the parent requesting the name change is to be informed that no change will be made until one of the conditions can be met
- If a parent raises a concern about their child being known under another name with a 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.

Keeping of attendance records

- To ensure consistency in the keeping of attendance records, the school must employ the codes outlined by the Catholic Education Office when recording absences and the reason for absences
- The hours of attendance at St Clare's College are 8:55 am to 3:20 pm. Supervision is provided from 8:30 am to 3:50 pm each day.
- Attendance records provided by a class teacher must be marked for each timetabled class or activity.



- When a child is on a graduated return to school (after an absence due to illness or for other reasons), s/he must be marked present for the time spent at school and absent with parental approval for the time not at school
- The status of the child as a child on graduated return must be recorded on the child's file held by the school.

Keeping of Attendance records for Senior Students

- It is a requirement of the College and the BSSS that all senior students are present for all scheduled lessons.
- Further, it is a requirement of the College that senior students are present each day for their Pastoral Care lesson at 8.55 am.
- After Term 1 of Year 11, senior students may leave at 11.10am except on Wednesdays when they can leave at 12. 35 pm, provided that they do not have any scheduled lessons and have their parent's written permission to do so.
- Senior students are not permitted to be off campus or to attend an appointment before the above times unless they have written permission to do so.
- Parents are requested to make appointments outside of school time, (for example driving lessons, physiotherapy appointments) and avoid scheduling family holidays or the like during term time.
- Leave for holidays will not normally be approved. Absences for appointments such as driving lessons will not be approved by the College.
- As soon as possible after returning to school after an absence, senior students must submit a note from parents/carers to the drop-box at Student Administration explaining the absence. The note must include the date of the absence/s, show due cause and have submitted with it any other relevant documentary evidence for non-attendance, for example, medical certificates etc.
- Absences beyond this time will be considered 'Unapproved'. As per BSSS policy, students who accrue more than 10% of unapproved absences will void the unit of study in which the absences have occurred.
- If a student misses an assessment item due to illness, a doctor's certificate will be required. Upon return to school, it is the student's responsibility to see her teacher about the missed item, and it will be normal practice to request that the student complete an equivalent or alternate piece of assessment.
- The College's Semester and Mid-Semester Reports show the number of unapproved absences. It is important to note that more than six 'Unapproved' absences can lead to the student receiving a V (or Void) grade for the Semester Unit. This has serious implications for the award of the Year 12 Certificate as well as for the completion of requirements for university entry for T students. If a student misses an assessment item and due cause with adequate documentary evidence is not supplied or the absence is not approved, the student will receive a notional zero for the assessment item.

Management of records

- Principals have a responsibility to ensure that records of all enrolments and attendance are made in accordance with Division 2 of the Territory Records Act 2002 which outlines agency responsibilities in relation to record management by making and keeping records and ensuring accessibility of information
- All records pertaining to enrolment and attendance must be available for inspection by an authorised person, on production of an authorised person's card. This is a legal requirement under Section 101 (1) of the Education Act 2004. The Principal must comply with such a request as failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine. Other action may also be taken e.g. disciplinary action
- Section 101 (2) of the Act states that the Chief Executive of the Directorate or an authorised person may request access to stated information about enrolments or attendances of children at the school or course during a stated period of time. Principals must comply with such a request as failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine
- Section 101 (3) of the Act states that an authorised person may make copies of the register of enrolments and attendances or any part of that register
- Principals are required, under Section 101 (4) of the Act, to take reasonable steps to assist the authorised person exercising his/her functions in regard to the inspection of registers of enrolment and attendance. Failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine

Compulsory attendance of school age children

- Under Section 11 of the Act, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that a child who lives in the ACT, is of compulsory school age and is enrolled at a school attends:
 - The school on every day, and during the times on every day, when school is open for attendance
 - Every activity of the school (including attendances at an approved educational course) that the school requires the child to attend
- Parents must have a reasonable excuse for not complying with the compulsory attendance requirements in the Act
- If parents do not have a reasonable excuse they are liable under the Act and may be fined. This is a strict liability offence
- Examples of a 'reasonable excuse' for a child's absence might include:
 - Illness, including recovery from major illness, injury or medical condition
 - Medical or dental treatment
 - Bereavement
 - Religious or cultural observation
 - Family holidays or extended visits overseas
 - Attendance at a wedding



- Attendance at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with hearings
- Participation in sanctioned debates, eisteddfods, sports, musical or theatrical productions
- not directly arranged by the school
- Participation in territory, interstate, national or international sporting event or equivalent.

Sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families

- Section 12 of the Act applies where the Chief Executive of the Directorate believes on reasonable grounds that:
 - A child of compulsory school age lives in the ACT
 - The child is not enrolled at a school or registered for home education.
- Section 12 (2) of the Act states that the Chief Executive of the Directorate may give written notice to a parent of the child requiring the parent to give the Chief Executive of the Directorate the details about the child stated in the notice within 7 days after the day the parent receives the notice.
- If the Chief Executive of the Directorate gives notice to the parent, the parent must comply with the notice. Failure to do so is a strict liability offence and may incur a fine.
- If a young person wishes to engage in a training or employment alternative they must have an Approval Statement from the Directorate to do so. This does not apply to education options including study or vocational training at a registered training organisation, university or higher education provider. Application packs and further information about the application process are available from the Directorate website: <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>. This does not include casual work undertaken by young people in addition to their education.
- An exemption certificate may be sought when it is not appropriate to require a child or young person to be enrolled or registered, or to meet the full-time participation requirements of the Act.

Examples of this include:

- An exemption from the full-time participation requirement due to health reasons
- Undertaking an apprenticeship/traineeship
- Part-time training/part-time work
- Part-time education/part-time work
- Full-time employment/graduated return to work

The Chief Executive has the authority to issue an exemption certificate. Applications and further information about the application process are available from the Directorate website: <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>.

Encouraging school attendance

- All strategies used to encourage school attendance should be documented and recorded on the school student database.
- When a student has been absent for three or more days without contact having been made with the school, the Pastoral Class Leader will phone the parents to ascertain the reason for the absence and offer pastoral care as appropriate to the circumstances
- Where the reason for absence is not satisfactory or the student is reluctant to return to school the Pastoral Class teacher will attempt to encourage a return to school.
- Where the approach by the Pastoral Class Leader is unsuccessful or a pattern of irregular attendance develops the matter should be referred to the Pastoral Coordinator who will make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.
- Where the approach by the Pastoral Coordinator is unsuccessful or a pattern of irregular attendance develops the matter should be referred to the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care who will make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.
- Depending upon the outcome of the meeting the school may seek the assistance of the School Counsellor or Parish Priest to assist the child/parents with a return to school.
- Other strategies as appropriate to the circumstances and within the resources of the school will be explored. These may include:
 - A graduated return
 - adjustment to class groupings or timetable
 - enlistment of the support of the School Support Team
 - Peer Tutoring support
 - meeting with the School Counsellors
 - enlistment of the support of the Indigenous Education Assistant (CEO)
 - liaison with external medical, counselling or community support services
- Where the approach/es by the Assistant Principal is/are unsuccessful the matter should be referred to the Principal who should make contact with the family and arrange for an interview with the parents and child in order to encourage attendance.
- The Principal should ensure the parents are aware of their obligations under the Act and make contact with external agencies that may be able to assist. Depending upon the circumstances these agencies may include:

Name of Agency	Contact phone number
Catholic Care – School Counselling	Internal Extension 425 and 444
Parish Priest	As applicable



Family GP	As applicable
CAMHS	6205 1971
FACES – Family and Adolescent Centre	6162 6100
Care and Protection Services	133427 (general enquiry) 1300 556 728 (mandated persons line)

- In the event that all possible avenues available to the school to encourage attendance have been exhausted without success, the Principal will make contact with the relevant Catholic Education Office School Services Officer for advice about arranging a meeting with an authorised non-government person.

References

Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2008-19/current/pdf/2008-19.pdf>

ACT Education Act 2004

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2004-17/current/pdf/2004-17.pdf>

Territory Records Act 2002

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2002-18/current/pdf/2002-18.pdf>

Education Options (other than school)

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf

Post Year 10 Alternatives

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf

Education Participation Requirements

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf

Non-Government School Attendance

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/584364/Enrolment-Policy-updates.pdf

Forms

Application for Exemption from Attendance at School (ACT)

Approved by:	Executive
Implementation date:	July 2011
Revision date:	2016
St Clare's Contact Officer	Assistant Principal Pastoral Care