



Catholic College Sale

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

1.0 POLICY AUTHORITY

The Board of Catholic College Sale Limited ('the Board') governs the College. Based on the principle of subsidiarity and in keeping with the Board's Delegations Schedule, the Board delegates a broad range of duties, functions, powers and authority to the Principal of Catholic College Sale (CC Sale). This includes the effective implementation of this *Student Attendance Policy* and the compliance obligations outlined herein.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006* (Vic.) (**the Act**) and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.) (**Regulations**), school attendance is compulsory for children and young people aged from six to 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted.

School attendance is assigned high priority at CC Sale. This priority is grounded not only in the College's legal obligations but in a wealth of research that demonstrates a strong correlation between attendance and optimal learning and wellbeing outcomes for students. Poor patterns of attendance place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and disadvantages them in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations.

Supporting students to attend school each day is the shared responsibility of all parents, guardians and/or carers, College staff and students themselves.

3.0 PURPOSE

This policy outlines:

- the College's expectations of students, parents/guardians/carers and staff in promoting and upholding high levels of student attendance;
- how the College manages student attendance, including absence management, punctuality and interventions for recurring absenteeism.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Attendance: A student is considered to be in attendance at school when onsite and/or involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the College (for example, remote learning, an excursion or camp). A student is also considered to be in attendance when the student is engaged in a re-engagement program or another school part-time to make up full-time attendance, and the schools or education settings have agreed the time fractions and the educational plan for the student.

Parent, Guardian and/or Carer: Includes 'a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides'.

School Attendance Officers: In the context of attendance, School Attendance Officers are empowered through the Act to issue School Attendance Notices, School Enrolment Notices and Infringement Notices.

5.0 PRINCIPLES

- 5.1** All CC Sale students are required to attend the College on a daily basis unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- 5.2** The College expects that parents and guardians/carers will work collaboratively with staff to create and maintain a culture where regular school attendance is the norm and where students arrive on time for school and for all classes.
- 5.3** CC Sale teaching staff have a legal responsibility to monitor and record attendance of students in their care on a daily basis, and to do so in collaboration with CC Sale's Student Attendance Officers.
- 5.4** The College regularly investigates any patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented.
- 5.5** Where patterns of absenteeism or habitual lateness exists, the College will endeavour to work collaboratively with the student's parents and guardians/carers to encourage better attendance and/ or punctuality.
- 5.6** In circumstances whereby the parents and guardians/carers are unwilling or unable to work collaboratively to ensure their child's regular attendance at CC Sale, the matter may be referred to the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) for intervention.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Parents, Guardians and/or Carers

Under the Act, parents, guardians and/or carers must enrol a child of compulsory school age at a registered school and ensure the child attends at all times when the school is open for instruction, unless an exemption from attendance has been granted.

For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent, guardian and/or carer must promptly provide an explanation for the absence on each occasion to the school. Parents and guardians/carers of CC Sale students are also required to:

- Ensure that their child attends the College each day and is on time for the first of their scheduled classes each day;
- Notify the College by phone, or in writing/email, or via PAM, of the reason for any absence as soon as possible on the first day of any absence;
- Where appropriate, provide the College with medical certificates explaining absences;
- Notify the Principal in writing of the dates of any extended holiday or travel that will cause their child to be absent from the College;
- Support their child's learning during continued or prolonged absences;
- Work cooperatively with the College to improve their child's attendance when the reasons for absences have been deemed unsatisfactory;
- Ensure that contact details for themselves are correct and up to date.

6.2 Students

Under the Act, students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled during normal school hours every day of the gazetted school term, unless there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student, or the student is registered for home schooling and/or has partial enrolment.

CC Sale students are expected to:

- Attend the College each day and all scheduled classes;
- Arrive on time to College and to every class;
- Provide a signed and dated note from their parent/guardian/carer when they have been absent from College (if their parent/guardian/carer has not already made contact with the College regarding the absence);
- After an absence, catch up on any work missed or complete any alternative setwork;
- Meet a 90% attendance requirement for scheduled classes at VCE level;
- Tell their classroom teachers in advance of their involvement in College-sanctioned activities that will result in their absence from class.

6.3 Teaching Staff

CC Sale teachers are required to:

- Monitor accurately and record student attendance on SIMON for every lesson, including for extras and any excursion or school approved activity they are leading;
- Enter on the roll any students late to class, including the time late (e.g. 5minutes);
- Monitor student attendance and punctuality patterns within the class;
- Alert the student's Pastoral or House Leader to any patterns of concern;
- Collaborate with students where absences may lead to missed assessment tasks.

A student's Pastoral and House Leader are expected to work collaboratively in following up all individual cases of student absence promptly and consistently, and implement appropriate monitoring and support strategies

6.4 School Attendance Officers

CC Sale School Attendance Officers are required to:

- Track and record on SIMON all Day/Late absences reported via parents/guardians/carers;
- Enter on SIMON Absentee/Late notes, early leave notes and other attendance information – e.g. known holidays, excursions;
- Issue SMS parent notifications of Unexplained Absences in Lesson 1 and track/record responses;
- Communicate relevant information to Pastoral Leaders and other staff as needed;
- Monitor unmarked rolls and follow up with teachers if they remain unmarked;
- Make contact via email with families of students with unexplained absence for the previous day;
- Generate attendance reports for leadership staff (weekly, fortnightly, as needed).

6.5 Principal and College Leadership

The Principal and College Leadership personnel (e.g. Pastoral Leaders, Learning Area Leaders, House Leaders, the Director of Engagement) will ensure that:

- The College maintains accurate and up-to-date student attendance records, identifies and follows up unexplained absences, and has procedures in place to support and maintain attendance in accordance with this policy;

- Parents, guardians and/or carers are informed of their responsibilities around attendance and initiatives aimed at promoting parental awareness of the importance of students attending the College every day;
- Attendance improvement strategies, interventions and levels of adjustment are implemented where the absence is having a significant impact on a student's educational achievement and development. These strategies and interventions may include establishing an Attendance Student Support Group, a Personalised Learning Plan, a Student Absence Learning Plan and/or a Return to School Plan;
- Strategies for supporting attendance are implemented for Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability.
- Referral processes are implemented to The Orange Door or to DFFH Child Protection where concerns exist about a student's need for protection from abuse and neglect.

NOTE: Where concerns arise relating to the wellbeing and safety of a student or concerns regarding a risk of family violence, the Principal will consider whether it is appropriate to make a request for information sharing under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (**CISS**) or Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (**FVISS**).

7.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 7.1 The College actively supports student attendance and retention.
- 7.2 The College maintains student attendance records, identifies and follows up unexplained absences, and has procedures in place to support and maintain attendance.
- 7.3 The College meets its duty of care owed to students, as well as the requirements of the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006* (Vic.) Act and Regulations.

8.0 REFERENCES

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)
Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.)
Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018
Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic.)
Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018
Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines
Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines
Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework • Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Contextualised Guidance
School Attendance Guidelines, 2018, issued by The Hon. James Merlino MP, State Minister for Education
Attendance Department of Education and Training Policy Advisory Guide,

9.0 RELATED COLLEGE POLICIES

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Enrolment Policy and Agreement

10.0 MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Board is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and for providing reports as required to the members of the company, i.e., the Bishop of Sale and the Provincial of the Marist Brothers Australia Limited (MSA Ltd).

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the obligations outlined in this policy;
- Assigning authority, responsibility and accountability at appropriate levels within the College for policy implementation and compliance;
- Providing delegated staff with the direction, support and resources necessary to fulfil policy requirements;
- Ensuring cyclic reviews of the policy and recommending to the Board any revisions that may be required to accommodate changes in legislation and diocesan directives;
- Reporting and escalating concerns, issues and policy breaches to the Board and working collaboratively with the Board to resolve them.

11.0 APPROVAL

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| Approved by | CC Sale Ltd Board |
| Person(s) Responsible | Principal |
| Date(s) Reviewed or Updated | June 2022 |
| Next Review Date | June 2024 |