



# ST COLUMBA'S

## PRIMARY SCHOOL WILSTON

### SCHOOL POLICY

## ATTENDANCE

### Policy Statement

St Columba's is committed to consistently managing student attendance in accordance with legislative requirements and sector standards. This policy establishes clear expectations for attendance and outlines the preferred communication methods, ensuring alignment with Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) guidelines.

### Compulsory Schooling

The Queensland Government states that "each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. A child should be enrolled in and attend school when they turn compulsory school age (six years and six months). Each parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase has the legal obligation to ensure that the young person participates full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

#### The Compulsory Schooling Phase:

- Starts the year a child turns 6 or starts Prep.
- Ends when the child turns 16 or finishes Year 10, whichever occurs first.

During this phase, the legal guardian has a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school every day.

#### The Compulsory Participation Phase:

- Starts the year the child stops being of compulsory school age (i.e., reaches the age of 16 or completes Year 10).
- Ends when the child:
  - Gains a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV or
  - Has participated in eligible options for two years after the completion of the Compulsory Schooling Phase or
  - Turns 17 years of age.

During this phase, legal guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child meets the attendance requirements of the eligible option of their choice.

### Roll-Marking

Our school is responsible for recording student attendance and responding to irregular attendance. Employees must use the eMinerva system to record student attendance and absences. Our school needs to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented. Our school, and by virtue of their employment, our teachers are legally required to monitor and record the attendance of students in their care daily, whether absent or present in class, on an excursion or at a school-based activity.

## Student Attendance Level

Students, legal guardians, and employees work together to ensure all students meet the school expectation of 90% or above attendance and zero unexplained absences.

90% attendance equates to 5 days of absence per term and 10 days of absence per semester.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement this procedure.</li><li>• Manage student attendance in consultation with the school community.</li><li>• Engage with families to proactively promote high levels of student attendance.</li><li>• Monitor non-attendance and re-engage students in partnership with parents/legal guardians.</li><li>• Ensure compliance of data entry in alignment with eMinerva requirements.</li><li>• Ensure employees are made aware of BCE's Student Attendance policy and this procedure.</li><li>• Ensure a link to this procedure is provided to relief staff (i.e., published on school portal).</li><li>• Record and report attendance data in annual reviews.</li><li>• Ensure relief staff are entered into WSS timesheets to gain access to eMinerva.</li><li>• Ensure eMinerva training is part of the induction process for new employees and annual training for existing employees.</li></ul>
Employees with Roll-Marking Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure data is entered into eMinerva in an accurate and timely manner, at least twice per day.</li><li>• For any student absent from school without explanation, report and follow up on the same day as the day of the absence to parents/legal guardians using ParentSMS.</li><li>• Follow up on eMinerva notifications of unexplained absences.</li><li>• Inform Principal of unexplained or 3+ days of absence with an explanation.</li></ul>

## Procedure

Activity	Requirement
Attendance Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance must be marked for all students each morning and afternoon by the class teachers.</li><li>• A secretarial School Officer must check this has been done for classes daily.</li><li>• A phone call (or email) must be made to the teacher if the class roll is not marked on time.</li><li>• A member of the Leadership Team must be advised of unmarked and incorrectly marked rolls.</li><li>• Incorrectly marked rolls must be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class.</li></ul>

Activity	Requirement
Present Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class must be marked 'Present – In Class'.</li> <li>In an alternate learning activity must be marked 'Present – Alternate Learning Activity'.</li> <li>With Guidance Counsellors must be marked as 'Present – In-School Appointment'.</li> <li>In sick bay must have their attendance category changed to 'Present – In Sick Bay' by the office personnel.</li> <li>Participating in activities (excursions, camps etc.) must be marked by the teacher responsible for the activity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>These attendance categories must not be changed unless the student is present in class and then the category must be changed to 'Present – In Class'.</li> <li>Students must only be marked as 'Present – Not Required to Attend' upon instruction from School Leadership.</li> </ul>
Absent Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not in class, and notification has not been received from a parent/legal guardian, must be marked 'Absent – Unexplained'.</li> <li>Not in class, and notification has been received from a parent/legal guardian, must be marked 'Absent – Explained'.</li> </ul> </li> <li>When marking the roll, if teachers have received written information from the parent/legal guardian regarding a student's absence from school, the teacher must enter the details (including absence category) into a log in eMinerva.</li> <li>If the parent/legal guardian has informed the office of the absence, the secretarial school officer must enter these details into a log in eMinerva.</li> <li>Class teachers must enter any information regarding future planned absences of students by entering a Notified Absence into eMinerva.</li> <li>For any student absent from school without explanation, the school must report to the parent/legal guardian on the day of the absence.</li> <li>If a student is away for three (3) consecutive days (or earlier if concerned), the class teacher/school officer or delegated employee must contact the parent/legal guardian.</li> <li>If a student has been previously marked 'Present at school', but they are not in class without permission, the teacher must ring the office and advise that the student is not present. Office personnel must inform school leadership that the student is missing. They must then attempt to locate the student who must be managed under the school's Student Behaviour Support Plan.</li> <li>Students must only be marked as 'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension' upon instruction from school leadership.</li> </ul>

Activity	Requirement
Unexplained Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A notification must be sent to the student's parent/legal guardian on the same day once an unexplained absence has been identified. The class teacher/school officer or delegated employee must follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's parent/legal guardian.</li> <li>If a child protection order is in place, then the Child Safety Officer must be notified, as well as the legal guardian.</li> <li>Past unexplained absences are indicated by the red Unexplained Absence Alert icon on class rolls. When the class teacher receives written explanation of the absence from the student's legal guardian, they must update the absence category and enter details into eMinerva.</li> </ul>
Late Arrivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A student is considered to have arrived late any time after 8.40am on a school day.</li> <li>All students arriving late must sign in at the office and must be given a late slip. This slip must be presented to the teacher when arriving in class. If they do not have a late slip, they must be sent to the office to sign in.</li> </ul>
Early Departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A student is considered to have departed early any time before 3.00pm on a school day. All students leaving early must provide a note from the parent/legal guardian in their diary (or via email) to their class teacher or to the office staff.</li> <li>Students must be signed out of the office by a secretarial school officer and a nominated parent/legal guardian must present at the office to pick up the student.</li> </ul>
SMS Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unexplained Absences: An SMS message must be sent to the student's parent/legal guardian on the same day once an unexplained absence has been identified.</li> <li>Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking must be made known to the APA/APRE/Principal. The teacher or office staff member must follow up by telephoning the student's parent/legal guardian.</li> </ul>
Non-Marking Electronic Roll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all class rolls must be provided by the office. Once the system is online the class teacher must mark the roll in eMinerva so that the records are correct. This may be done the next day, if necessary. Only administrators can amend marked rolls in consultation with the Leadership Team.</li> <li>In the event of an emergency evacuation, hard copies of rolls must be taken to the evacuation area and be marked by class teachers. Class teachers must advise the chief warden (or delegate) of any unexplained absentees.</li> <li>During an emergency lockdown, the roll must not be marked.</li> </ul>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An activity must be entered into eMinerva for students attending excursions, camps, and other school-based activities.</li> <li>A yellow alert will appear next to the student's name on class rolls to indicate the student has a timetable clash. The activity must be marked by the employee responsible for the event, e.g., 'Present – Work Study'; 'Present – Excursion'. This attendance category will automatically inherit through the rest of the student's timetable for the day.</li> <li>These attendance categories must not be changed unless the student is present at school and then the category must be changed to 'Present – In Class'.</li> </ul>

Activity	Requirement
Relief and Supervising Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relief staff must have access to the school portal and eMinerva using their own BCE username and password and must mark attendance in eMinerva for each class they are supervising.</li> <li>Teachers conducting supervision must mark attendance in eMinerva for the class they are supervising in accordance with this procedure.</li> </ul>
Part-time Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part time students must sign in and out of the school office on arrival or departure as per arrangements made.</li> </ul>
Mobile Attendance Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers wishing to use this application can access it via their school portal and entering their BCE username and password. The User Guide – Mobile Attendance Application must be read prior to use.</li> </ul>
Extended Leave Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/legal guardians requesting that students be absent for a period of more than ten (10) days must submit a formal request notifying the Principal of the intended days of absence and reason for absences. This will be considered in accordance with the <i>“Exemption for more than 10 school days and under 110 school days for a student at a non-state school. Amendment – Education (General Provisions) Act 2006”</i>.</li> <li>Teachers are not required to make provisions for students who have taken leave for holidays or travel outside of the school term.</li> <li>No discount to school fees will apply.</li> </ul>

## Performance

The school must perform high-level check of this procedure annually and a detailed review at least once every two (2) years.

## References

- Attendance – Description of Attendance Categories.
- Attendance – How to Mark Bulk Attendance Late Arrival or Early Departure.
- Attendance – Accessing Another Teacher’s Roll.
- Attendance – How to Manage Unexplained Absences.
- Security – Relief Staff.
- Attendance - How to Mark Attendance (Teaching and Administration Staff).
- Student Attendance policy.
- Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation.

## Definition

Unexplained Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the parent/legal guardian does not contact the school.</li> </ul>
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Review and Adoption

This policy is effective immediately upon adoption by the school administration and will be reviewed periodically to ensure its alignment with safety protocols and regulatory guidelines. Any necessary revisions will be communicated to all stakeholders promptly.

Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review			
Prepared By	Parent Representatives, WHSO Peter Maynard and School Principal Nick Fogarty.		
Approved By	School Leadership Team		
Endorsed By	St Columba's School Board	Date:	June 2025
Next Review Date	June 2028		