



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 (the College). 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 a high priority at the College. 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 well-being outcomes for students. Poor attendance patterns place students at risk of not realising their educational, social, and psychological potential, and disadvantage them in the quality of choices they can make in later life situations.

Supporting students in attending school each day is the shared responsibility of all parents, guardians, carers, College staff, and students themselves.

3.0 PURPOSE

This Policy outlines:

- the College's expectations of students, parents, guardians or 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 on-site and/or involved in an off-site 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 on the time fractions and the educational plan for the student.

Parent, Guardian 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'.

5.0 PRINCIPLES

- 5.1** 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, guardians or 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** 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 the College's Director of Engagement.
- 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 exist, the College will endeavour to work collaboratively with the student's parents, guardians or carers to encourage better attendance and/ or punctuality.
- 5.6** In circumstances whereby the parents, guardians or carers are unwilling or unable to work collaboratively to ensure their child's regular attendance at the College, the matter may be referred to the Principal and/or the Chair of the Board.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Parents, Guardians or Carers

Under the Act, parents, guardians 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 or carer must promptly provide an explanation for the absence on each occasion to the school.

Parents, guardians or carers of College 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.

College 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 or carer when they have been absent from College (if their parent, guardian or 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 the 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

College 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. 5 minutes);
- 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 Directors of Engagement

College Directors of Engagement are required to:

- track and record on SIMON all Day/Late absences reported via parents, guardians or 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 House Leaders and other staff as needed;
- Student Services monitors unmarked rolls and follows up with teachers if they remain unmarked;
- ensure that explanations for absences that are provided are a reasonable excuse for the purposes of their responsibilities under the Act;
- follow up any unexplained absences of a student by contacting the parent, guardian or carer of the student as soon as practicable on the same day;
- ensure that parents, guardians or carers are notified promptly regarding a student's unsatisfactory school or class attendance. If, upon being notified of their child's absence or contacted to seek an explanation, a parent, guardian or carer reports that the child was not living with them on that day, they should ensure they notify another parent, guardian or carer who was responsible for ensuring the child attended school on the relevant day(s). If contact cannot be made with the parent, guardian or carer, contact should be made with the emergency contact(s) nominated on the student's file held by the school;
- 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 Teachers, Learning Area Leaders, House Leaders, Directors 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 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 well-being 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 on 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 LEGISLATION AND RESOURCES

- *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 POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

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

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

Approved by	CC Sale Ltd Board
Person(s) Responsible	Principal
Date(s) Reviewed or Updated	September 2025
Next Review Date	September 2027