

Student Attendance Policy and Procedure

Introduction:

Schools are required under the Education Act 1972 (SA) and the Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007:

- to ensure that students enrolled are attending school or participating in an approved learning program and
- to maintain the appropriate attendance registers.

Conditions of Compliance:

Children of Compulsory School age (six years and up to the age of sixteen years) residing in South Australia are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless exempted by the Minister.

Students of Compulsory Education age (between 16 and 17 years) are required to be in attendance at school or a combination of school and other approved training unless exempted by the Minister.

The role of the College:

SCC is required to maintain attendance rolls and enrolment registers or computerised records of the same, with reasons for absences and dates of sessions of enrolment recorded.

Adequate hard copy material or an electronic record must be available for inspection by the Education Standards Board when it visits the College as part of the review of registration process. This material must demonstrate that a comprehensive record of absences and attendances is being maintained, both for the current year and to meet legislative requirements for information retention.

Colleges must publish average student attendance rates as part of the College Performance Information reporting requirements stipulated by the Australian Government.

The role of the Parents:

Parents need to:

- ensure their child arrives at the College or commences their educational program on time every day
- minimise disrupting their child's school day so their child has the best opportunity to learn
- contact the College prior to any planned absences;
- Obtain written authorisation from the College Principal for an exemption from compulsory attendance where an absence exceeds four consecutive school days
- contact the College by 8:30am when a student is unable to attend on the day
- provide an explanation (in writing) for each absence, on the day of the child's return to the College
 - This may take the form of:
 - a medical certificate
 - a written note (e.g. SMS/e-mail) containing the student's name, date of absence(s) and reasons for absence(s)
- provide a medical certificate to the College on the day of the child's return to the College if the child was away for three or more consecutive days due to illness
- ensure their child follows the College's recommended processes and procedures for late arrival and early departure

Student Attendance Procedure:

Teaching staff at SCC record student attendance for their class on a daily basis. Primary and Secondary classes record attendance in the morning at 8:30am.

Late student arrivals are to report to the Front Office and sign in. The student collects a green late slip and gives it to the class teacher to advise that the Student Services Office has recorded their arrival.

The Front Office records the late arrival in Edumate with a reason that has been supplied by the parent/caregiver.

The College communicates unexplained absences to parents via an automated text message at 10am each day. Homegroup teachers are responsible for monitoring student absences in their class and identifying if they have reoccurring absences or prolonged absences.

The College has an obligation to follow up the prolonged absences of students and will use the following procedure:

- Contact Parents/Caregivers via phone or email when the student has had 3 days unexplained continuous absence.
- Communicate in writing to Parents/Caregivers regarding continued absence when:
 - o the student has reached a point of being absent for 10 days or more
 - o the student has reached a point of being absent for 20 days or more
- Communicate with the Truancy Officer regarding continued absence when:
 - o the student has reached a point of being absent for 25 days or more in a term or for continued absence. When a student arrives at Seaview Christian College with a poor attendance record from previous school, this record will be used to establish any re-occurring patterns of absenteeism at Seaview.
- If concern for the student's welfare exists then the College will also report to the relevant authorities such as AISSA, CARL and SA Police.

Exemptions:

The Principal of the College may:

- by written notice, grant or vary a temporary exemption (conditionally or unconditionally) for family travel/holiday reasons from the requirements of Part 6 of the Education Act 1972 or revoke an exemption for a child of compulsory education age enrolled within the College for a period of no less than one month and for a maximum of 12 months.
- by written notice, grant or vary a temporary exemption (conditionally or unconditionally) for medical or other/conditional reasons from the requirements of Part 6 of the Education Act 1972 or revoke an exemption for a child of compulsory education age enrolled within the college for a period of no less than one month and for a maximum of 12 months.
- by written notice, grant or vary a permanent exemption (conditionally or unconditionally) from the requirements of Part 6 of the Education Act 1972 or revoke an exemption for a child of compulsory education age enrolled within the college for a period of no less than one month and for a maximum of 12 months.

Temporary exemptions:

Principals have the authority to approve temporary exemptions for up to four weeks for the reason of family travel / holiday. If more than one month and for reasons other than travel/family holiday, the application requires approval by the Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (Independent Schools).

If a student is absent for **four or more consecutive days**, parents will need to complete an Exemption Form. This must be Principal approved before taking the period of leave.

For the purposes of family travel/holidays during term:

Even though the College does not encourage students to be withdrawn from lessons for the purpose of family travel/holidays, we still require all families who seek to withdraw their children from attending school to submit an 'Exemption' form. (refer Appendix A: Exemption Form). Approvals will only be granted in special circumstances.

Approvals for exemptions from attendance will continue to be given in other areas including:

- Ongoing medical reasons;
- Non-College sporting events exceeding one day;

Please note: Students failing to submit homework/assignments during absences from the College, will receive a zero grade, unless a medical certificate is provided.

Permanent exemptions:

Students under 15 cannot be given a permanent exemption unless there are strong recommendations from the College and the education department. Students aged 16 do not need an exemption if they can provide evidence to the College that they are:

- Attending TAFE or other courses
- Doing an apprenticeship or traineeship

Students aged 15 and 16 who are taking up full-time employment may apply for permanent exemption from the College. To qualify:

- Students under 16 must be working more than 30 hours per week
- 16-year-old students must be working more than 25 hours per week

Documents referenced:

- Appendix A: Exemption Form