



Catholic
Education
Commission
Tasmania

Attendance Policy

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and each School's Attendance Protocol is to outline the expectations and obligations for all parents/guardians of students and all independent students enrolled in Catholic schools in Tasmania in supporting consistent attendance at school.

2 WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO

This policy applies to all Catholic Schools operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart.

3 RATIONALE

- 3.1** Attending every school day is essential to enable students to achieve the most from their education and to achieve quality outcomes in their lives.
- 3.2** Attending the full school day is also essential for students to gain the maximum opportunity to learn, grow, keep up with their work and to connect with their teachers, friends and actively benefit from the sense of belonging to their school community.
- 3.3** Parents/guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child (aged 5 to 18 years old) is both enrolled and attending school as noted in *section 16* of the *Education Act 2016 (Tas)* (Education Act). Where a student is unable to attend school, parents/guardians or independent students must advise the school.
- 3.4** Schools are required to record all absences from school and formally follow up any absences with parents/guardians and independent students and to follow *Ministerial Instruction No 6 Relating to School Student Absences*.

4 POLICY PRINCIPLES

- (a) Catholic Education Tasmania adopts the definitions of Unauthorised absence and Authorised absences from *Ministerial Instruction No 6 Relating to School Student Absences*.
- (b) Authorised absences are those authorised under the Education Act, specifically sections 19 and 36, and the circumstances set out in *Ministerial Instruction No 4 Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School*.
- 4.1** The following are examples of Authorised absences:
- (a) Sickness/incapacity (the Principal may require a medical certificate if a student has had more than five (5) days sickness during a term).
- (b) Medical, legal or related appointments.
- (c) Natural disaster or extreme weather preventing students from safely attending school.
- (d) Any other event requiring the school to be closed and for students' education to take place remotely (evidence of engagement with on-line learning will be necessary for a student's absence to be authorised).
- (e) Terminal illness of an immediate family member.
- (f) Bereavement of a person the student has had a close, significant or family relationship with.

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- (g) Having witnessed or been subjected to family violence.
- (h) Being a participant in a recognised State, National or International event.
- (i) Participation in a recognised learning experience.
- (j) An application for Home Education having been received by the Education Registrar and provisional registration having been granted.
- (k) A full list of reasons can be accessed in *Ministerial Instruction No 4 Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School*.
- (l) If a student is absent from school for an Authorised absence, parents/guardians or independent students are required to contact the school as per the individual school Attendance Protocol.

4.2 In the event of a student having multiple days absent in a school year the individual school will follow up with the parents/guardians or independent students as follows:

4.2.1 In the event of Authorised absences over five (5) days in a Term, schools will work with families to provide appropriate ongoing education and support. In this instance, Principals may require evidence to be provided which can include:

- (i) Medical Certificate/s
- (ii) Statutory Declaration from parents/guardians
- (iii) Documentation confirming participation in student's sporting, cultural or academic event.

4.2.2 If a student has an absence of more than 5 (five) consecutive days, or an unexplained pattern of absences, or 10 (ten) days of absence in a school year, the School will:

- (a) send parents/guardians/independent students a letter notifying them of the number of days absent and providing information on the impact on the student's learning.
- (b) work with parents/guardians/independent students to increase the student's attendance to maximise the student's opportunity to catch up with the school work missed.
- (c) where the parents/guardians/independent students have provided an acceptable reason for the absence, Principals may use their discretion in relation to sending this letter.

4.2.3 If the student has an absence of more than twenty (20) days in a school year, the School will:

- (a) send the parents/guardians/independent student a letter notifying them of the number of days absent and providing them information on the impact on the students learning.
- (b) Request for a formal meeting to discuss the impact on the students learning and may include discussion on whether part time attendance may support the student to participate in school and in an approved learning program.

4.2.4 If the student's attendance does not improve, the Principal or Authorised Delegate will refer the matter to the Education Registrar in accordance with the *Catholic Education Tasmania Referral for a Compulsory Conciliation Conference (Guidelines for*

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Catholic Schools) and *Ministerial Instructions No 6 Relating to School Student Absences*

- 4.2.5** If a student is absent from school for any other reason or if no communication is received from a parent/guardian or independent student on the day of absence explaining the reason for a student's absence the absence will be recorded as an Unauthorised absence.
- 4.2.6** The student's enrolment in the School may be terminated if attendance does not return to an acceptable level under the *Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy and Procedure*.
- 4.2.7** Given the number and length of term breaks, it is expected that families will arrange holidays during these times.
- 4.2.8** Should a student be absent from school for a period longer than one (1) school term the school will be unable to hold the enrolment place and this will be communicated to:
- (a) the parent/guardian or independent student in writing; and
 - (b) the Office of the Education Registrar (OER) via the Enrolment Cancellation Form.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Parents/guardians	<p>Parents/guardians from Prep to Year 12 must ensure their child attends school every day as noted in section 16 of the Education Act.</p> <p>Parents and guardians from Prep to Year 12 must ensure their child attends school from the start time to the finish time as determined by the school or reflected in the published school term dates and the school timetable.</p> <p>Parents/guardians must work with the school in the development of strategies to re-engage their child when there has been a decline in attendance.</p> <p>When a child is unable to attend school the parent/guardian of the child must advise the school in accordance with the individual school's Attendance Protocol.</p>
Independent students	<p>Independent students must ensure they attend school every day.</p> <p>Independent students must ensure they attend school from the start time to the finish time as noted by the school or reflected in the published school term dates and the school</p>

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	<p>timetable.</p> <p>When an independent student is unable to attend school, the independent student must advise the school in accordance with the individual school's Protocol.</p>
Principals	<p>Required to follow and ensure the implementation of this Policy in their school.</p> <p>Required to develop and implement a School Attendance Protocol in their school.</p> <p>Ensure their school is accurately recording attendance.</p> <p>Develop strategies to follow up absences and communicate expectations on attendance within their school.</p> <p>Develop strategies to re-engage students and their parents/guardians who have had a decline in attendance.</p> <p>Develop strategies for re-engaging students with complex needs who have barriers to school attendance and refer to other support as required.</p> <p>Understand that repeated absences or a significant decline in school attendance can be an indication of a wellbeing or child safety matter and act accordingly to support the child.</p> <p>Consider if a referral for Part time attendance should be considered to support the child according to their individual circumstances. Where this action is considered, the Principal should follow Ministerial <i>Instruction No. 3 for Part-Time Attendance at School</i> and CET's Part Time Attendance Form.</p> <p>When action is required, the Principal should follow CET's Compulsory Conciliation Guidelines.</p>
Principal Lead	<p>Assist the Principal to comply with this Policy.</p> <p>Support the Principal in the event a referral for either Part Time Attendance or Compulsory Conciliation is required.</p>

CET Child Safety Officer	Assists Principals and Principal Leads in responding to any matters that may involve Child Safety.
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6 RECORD KEEPING

Records must be kept for the required length of time in accordance with our legal requirements, CECT Records Management Policy and records retention schedule.

7 COMPLIANCE (LEGISLATION AND OTHER DOCUMENTS)

This Policy relates to the following legislation and guidelines:

Commonwealth legislation

- (a) [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)
- (b) [Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\)](#)
- (c) [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)

Tasmanian Legislation

- (d) [Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 \(Tas\)](#)
- (e) [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 \(Tas\)](#)
- (f) [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 \(Tas\)](#)
- (g) [Education Act 2016 \(Tas\)](#)
- (a) [Education Regulations 2017 \(Tas\)](#)
- (h) [Ministerial Instruction No 2 Dual Enrolment of Students with a Disability](#)
- (i) [Ministerial Instruction No 3 for Part-Time Attendance at School](#)
- (j) [Ministerial Instruction No 4 Students Excused from Daily Attendance at School](#)
- (k) [Ministerial Instruction No 6 Relating to School Student Absences](#)
- (l) [Ministerial Instruction No 10 Application Exemption Participation in Approved Learning Program](#)
- (m) [Ministerial Instruction No 11 for Application for Part Time Attendance at an Approved Learning Program](#)

Other

[CECT Child Safety Policy](#)

[Catholic Education Commission Tasmania Records Management Policy](#)

[Catholic Education Commission Tasmania Privacy Policy](#)

[CECT Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy](#)

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CECT Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Procedure

Tasmanian Catholic Education Office Part-time Attendance Form

Tasmanian Catholic Education Office Compulsory Conciliation Guidelines

8 DEFINED TERMS

Refer to CECT Terms and Definitions document available on the CET Website for other terms and definitions

9 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For further information and assistance in relation to this Policy please contact Advisor: Governance Policy and Research policy@catholic.tas.edu.au

10 REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed every four years.

Updated versions of this Policy will be available on the CET website and on request.

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