



# Attendance Policy

Version 5.3

## RANGS 3.8

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Policy Pertains to:	Principal; Executive; Administration Staff; Teachers; Parents & Students

Version	Date	Notes
5.3	February 2023	Updated to reflect new procedures in SEQTA.

## Version History

Version	Date	Notes
1	Feb 2011	Draft Document for Board Approval
2	Mar 2014	Revised and adopted
2.1	May 2015	Revised and adopted including new ministerial codes
3.0	Nov 2015	Updated in line with Government Guidelines - Adopted
4.0	July 2016	Updated in line with AIS Guidelines for Independent Schools and to incorporate Exemptions Policy
4.1	November 2017	Updated 2.2 and 2.3 based on poor school attendance and advice received from Geoff Brisby regarding following up attendance.
4.2	May 2018	Minor amendment Attendance Procedures 2.3.2
5.0	March 2019	Updated to CEN Hub Policy
5.1	February 2022	Reviewed in line with updated Exemption from School-Procedures and delegations January 2022; minor edits to procedures
5.2	July 2022	New CEN (NSW & ACT) document, based on former CEN Hub (NSW & ACT) Attendance Policy Revised according to AIS NSW 'Guide to Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning'
5.3	February 2023	Updated to reflect new procedures in SEQTA.

***This policy and its associated documents are prepared by CEN (NSW & ACT), for use by member schools. Procedures and supporting documentation should be customised to reflect those of the individual school.***

***Do not alter policy statements without consultation with the SEO of CEN (NSW & ACT).***

***The significant work of CEN Hub (NSW & ACT), now merged with CEN (NSW & ACT), is acknowledged in the original production of these documents.***



## VISION STATEMENT

*A Christ centred learning community exploring and impacting on God's world*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To assist parents in the nurture of their children, by providing a Christ-centred, biblically grounded, academically rigorous and culturally relevant education that instils a sense of identity, purpose and hope in students that equips them to live for God's glory.*

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**Important related documents:**

Child Protection Policy  
Enrolment Policy  
Student Welfare Policy  
Behaviour Management Policy

Student Code of Conduct  
Secondary Assessment Policy

**Relevant legislation:**

Education Act 1990  
Australian Education Act 2013

**References:**

DET Exemption From School procedures: Learning & Engagement Directorate 2015  
NESA, Registered and Accredited Non-Government Schools(RANGS) Manual (latest version on NESA website)  
DET School Attendance Legal Action Guidelines  
ACARA  
AIS NSW [www.aisnsw.edu.au](http://www.aisnsw.edu.au) – resources and templates  
AIS Guide to Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning  
Covid-19 Advice for NSW Independent Schools  
[www.aitsl.edu.au](http://www.aitsl.edu.au)

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Parents are required to ensure that their child/ren of compulsory school age (6 years-17 years old) is:

- Enrolled at, and attends, a government or registered non-government school;  
OR
- Is registered for home schooling.

It is an offence under the Education Act if a parent fails to meet this duty.

Schools are required to ensure that individual students meet certain attendance standards. (NSW Education Act (1990) (Sections 22 + 24)).

This includes mandatory attendance (Sections 21B, B(2), B(3)) for students between 6 and 17 years of age, on all designated school days, unless exemptions are applicable.

All students must complete Year 10, after which, and until they turn 17, they must be:

- In school, or registered for home schooling; or
- In approved education or training such as TAFE, apprenticeship etc; or
- In full time paid employment, and must be at least 15 years old (av. 25 hour p/w over 4 weeks); or
- In a combination of work, education and /or training; or
- Granted an exemption from enrolment during year 10 if in full time apprenticeship or traineeship. (See: Enrolment Policy)

Students in Stage 6 must attend school in order to fulfil course requirements and accreditation for the Higher School Certificate.

Registers of Enrolment, and Daily Attendance, of all students at the school must be maintained. The primary goal of the school's attendance procedures is the well-being and quality education of all students.

Studies of chronic absenteeism (>10%) show that regardless of the type, absence has a compounding negative impact on academic performance. (AITSL Spotlight Attendance Matters)

## **2 CHRISTIAN RATIONALE**

Richmond Christian College exists to partner with parents in educating their children. The school undertakes this role with great respect, understanding that this responsibility and authority also comes from God.

Whilst regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential; the school has a duty of care for students during school hours. The register of attendance is an important tool to ensure the whereabouts and safety of all students enrolled at the school, and to give an account to their parents. It allows the school to pursue its program of complete education, appropriate welfare and discipline for the student, and pastoral care that may extend to the family.

Encouraging regular attendance is a core school responsibility. Procedures for the accurate record of daily attendance, and follow-up of absences, assist the school to fulfill its responsibilities to students and their families, to the state government, and to God.

### 3 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document sets out the policy and procedures of Richmond Christian College (RCC) to: monitor student attendance; enable the school to exercise its duty of care and pastoral obligations towards students; and fulfil its legal responsibilities.

### 4 DEFINITIONS

**ACARA** – Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

**Attendance** – a child attends a school if, and only if, the child attends the school at all times while the school is open for the child's instruction or participation in school activities. (Education Act definition)

**DET** – Department of Education & Training

**NESA** – NSW Educational Authority

**Parent/s** – any person having the custody or care of a child

**RANGS** – Registered and Accredited Non-Government Schools

**Absenteeism** – defined as any form of absence from school or class.

**School refusal** – refers to when a child or young person refuses to attend school and/or has problems remaining in class for an entire day and is anxiety-based (e.g. separation, generalised or social anxiety driven). It can present as extended absences from school, periodic absences from school, missed classes or chronic tardiness with the child or young person experiencing intense dread (or anxiety) about school that precipitates pleas for future non-attendance. Parents/carers are aware of school refusal absences and no attempt by the child is made to conceal these absences.

**Chronic school refusal** – defined as missing 15 school days in an academic year or missing at least 10% of school days at some point of the academic year.

**Truancy** – refers to concealed absences by the child or young person, without parents'/carers' knowledge. Truancy is not anxiety-based and usually involves the child or young person engaging in alternate behaviours.

**School withdrawal** – refers to when parents/carers deliberately keep a child away from school for various reasons including family illness, parental conflict or family holidays

## **5 POLICY**

Reference: NESA RANGS Manual, sections: 3.6.2; 3.8; 3.10.1

The school will:

- (a) Maintain an accurate Register of Enrolment.
- (b) Maintain a Register of Daily Attendance.
- (c) Maintain procedures to record attendance and absences accurately, using the NSW Attendance Register Codes 2015.
- (d) Maintain procedures for the exercise of the Minister's delegation (Section 25 of Education Act 1990) to grant exemptions from attendance at school under prescribed circumstances.
- (e) Maintain procedures to monitor attendance data; and ensure that students enrolled at RCC attend school as they are able, including procedures to ensure the continued engagement of students in remote learning activities during periods of school closure e.g. COVID-19 public health orders.
- (f) Implement strategies to improve unsatisfactory attendance and student learning and engagement at school.
- (g) Maintain procedures for reporting to regulators; including Student Attendance in the school's Annual Report.
- (h) Maintain records as required.
- (i) Maintain procedures for a safe environment and pastoral care for students; and for students to be supported in learning and pastoral care during absences.

State or Federal government advice in exceptional circumstances (e.g. Covid-19) may introduce new requirements to this policy and/ or procedures. These are generally communicated to the school by NESA or the AIS; and the school shall make the necessary amendments.

## **6 PROCEDURE – REGISTER OF ENROLMENT**

### **6.1 Register of Enrolment**

- (a) The school will maintain a Register of Enrolments (School Pro/SEQTA Administrative System) that includes for each student:
  - Name, date of birth, age and address
  - Name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
  - Date of enrolment
  - For students older than 6 years of age, previous school or pre-enrolment situation

- Where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination

### **DESTINATION UNKNOWN**

- Where the destination school of a student below 17 years of age is unknown, a record that the Department of Education has been notified of the student's:
  - full name and date of birth
  - last known address
  - last date of attendance
  - parents' names and contact details
  - indication of possible destination
  - other information that may assist in locating the student, and
  - any known WHS risks associated with contacting the parents or student

Notification is sent to: [attendance@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:attendance@det.nsw.edu.au)

(See AIS website for notification template which can be used on school's letterhead.)

- (b) The Register of Enrolments will be retained for a minimum of 7 years after the last data entry (NESA) before archiving.

School Pro/SEQTA system retains records indefinitely and is backed up to the cloud.

- (c) Enrolment data is entered into School Pro by Admin staff, for new enrolments, students departing or changes to the information held by the school.

See: Enrolment Policy

## **7 PROCEDURE - ATTENDANCE**

### **7.1 Communicating Expectations**

The school communicates to parents its requirements and expectations for attendance, including:

- Regular attendance on all designated school days;
- The importance of punctuality;
- When and how to notify the school of a student's absence, including partial day absences;
- Processes the school will follow when an absence note is not returned;
- How to apply for Exemptions and Leave; and
- The consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

These are communicated at enrolment; and reinforced regularly through communications; and to students via the RCC Student Code of Conduct.



## **7.2 Attendance Register**

- (a) Class lists PK - Year 12 are identified by Year level and teacher's name.
- (b) Class rolls are maintained through Edval and synced to the SEQTA administration system.
- (c) The daily attendance/ absence, or variation of attendance, and reason for absence, of students shall be recorded on a class roll electronically using the Minister's Attendance Register Codes (Codes).
- (d) Updates to Codes as required are advised by AIS e.g. Covid-19 circumstances.
- (e) Documentation for absences, including parent notes & Exemptions and Leave forms are maintained in student files.

## **7.3 Daily Attendance**

- (a) Rolls are marked each morning by teachers in homeroom electronically via SEQTA. K-6 classes mark the roll again after recess and lunch. Year 7-12 classes are marked each period.
- (b) Admin staff ensure all rolls are marked by *9.30am* or will contact the teacher to complete the roll.
- (c) Information from parent notes received, are transferred to SEQTA using the Minister's Codes by Admin staff.  
  
Codes are used to indicate reason for absence or variation to attendance
- (d) Late arrival, early departure or a period out of school, such as for a medical appointment, are recorded as partial day absences.
- (e) Attendance will be marked at events such as sport carnivals, excursions and off-site activities, in hard copy to be transcribed into rolls, or electronically, if available.
- (f) The Heads of School shall inform Admin staff of all student suspensions and expulsions. [E – for suspension away from school; In-school suspension, record lack of involvement in lessons]
- (g) The Attendance Register shall be available for inspection during school hours by a NESA inspector or by any authorised person, who may require the principal of the school to furnish a copy of the register or any part of it.
- (h) Class rolls and documentation will be retained for 7 years after the last entry was made and retained on SEQTA system indefinitely and backed up to the cloud.
- (i) Attendance and late arrivals (PK– Year 12) are recorded on student reports.
- (j) Attendance is reported each year in the school's Annual Report.

## **8 PROCEDURE – PARTIAL ATTENDANCE**

### **8.1 Late Arrival after 8.50am**

- (a) Students late to school must report to the School Office to sign in. Primary Students will receive a “Signed in at the Office” pink slip to give to their class teacher. Secondary students are to present their student diaries to be stamped and signed by School Office Staff to show their class/homeroom teacher.
- (b) If the parent/caregiver is with the student, both parent and student come to the office and the parent signs the student in.
- (c) If the student’s parent or caregiver does not come into the office, the student signs themselves in and a letter must be provided by the parent stating the reason for the late arrival. If no letter is present with the student the office will call the parent immediately seeking a reason.
- (d) SEQTA records are amended to record the partial absence including time of arrival.

### **8.2 Early Departure**

- (a) Students must be picked up by a parent or authorised adult, who will sign them out. Students 16 years and older may sign themselves out on the provision of a note from their parents.
- (b) Students departing early must be signed out at the School Office. The Admin Staff will phone the classroom to ask the student to come to the School Office.
- (c) If parents notify the school of another adult picking up their child, Admin staff shall phone the student’s class or homeroom teacher to inform the student.
- (d) The identity of unknown people should be checked by Admin staff before releasing the student into the care of that person.

If a student appears anxious about the identity of an adult arriving to pick them up, Admin staff should ask the child to wait in another room, and inform the Principal or another Executive staff member of the circumstances.

### **8.3 Lesson Attendance**

- (a) Lesson rolls – attendance in individual classes is noted against the class list in SEQTA.
- (b) Absence from class when a student is marked ‘present’ for the day, without a note or prior approval for another school activity, shall be dealt with according to school policy.

## 9 PROCEDURE – ABSENCES

### 9.1 Notification of Absences

- (a) Parents are informed that all absences are to be notified to the school, the types of absences the school records, and how to notify the school.
- (b) Student absences may be notified via phone (documented call time and reason taken by Admin staff and emailed to parents), or in writing via email, letter or the Skoolbag app.
- (c) **Absences – Stage 5 and 6**  
**NOTE:** A medical certificate must be provided for a student who is absent from school:
- the day before a formal Assessment Task is due in Stage 6.
  - on the day a formal Assessment Task is due in both Stage 5 & 6 unless the Assessment Task has been submitted previously. (See Secondary Assessment Policy)
- (d) All notes to the school should include:
- child's name
  - date of absence
  - reason for absence
  - parent signature
- (e) If a note includes information in addition to the explanation of the student's absence, the Administration Officer will indicate where it should be directed. Generally:
- Complaints should be directed to the Head of School.
  - If the note indicates that an extended leave form is required, Admin staff will contact the parents to arrange completion of the appropriate form.
  - If a parent informs office staff of anticipated absence other than medical, a leave form should be given, or posted, and the Head of School informed of the families intentions, for follow up.
- (f) The Principal has the discretion to request further information in substantiation of an absence, and to accept or reject a reason for the student's absence; and to determine the Code to be recorded for the student.
- (g) Application for absence due to other reasons must be made by parents, using the 'Application for Exemption from Attendance at School' Form, available from the School Office. It is for absences other than illness, including part-days, or extended leave. (See below: Exemptions from Attendance)

### 9.2 Recording Absences

- (a) When a note of absence from the parent **is returned:**
- to class, the teacher will send the note to the School Office

- to the School Office, either directly or by the class teacher, Admin staff will amend the SEQTA record with the appropriate Code.
- (b) When an absent note from the parent **is not returned**:
- For unexplained absences, a text message is sent to parents of the student:  
  
"RCC records show that {prefname} is absent from school {day\_date}. Please reply with Student Name / Date of Absence / Reason. Thank you."
  - An absence is 'unexplained' if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within seven (7) days.
- NOTE: A Code cannot be changed after 7 days. If a reason for absence is returned after that time, a note is made and linked to the student's file.
- (c) A daily report of absentees and late arrivals is generated from SEQTA by Admin staff, and kept in the School Office.
- (d) Notes are filed in the student's file.
- (e) The number of days absent and late arrivals are indicated on student reports, transferred from SEQTA records.
- (f) If truancy is suspected in cases of unexplained absences, and parents are unable to be contacted, a letter may be sent from the school in an unmarked envelope.
- (g) Staff should refer any comments or observations relating to attendance or absences to the appropriate Head of School.
- (See Chart - Follow Up of Student Absence)
- (h) Pastoral Care '3 Day Rule' - When a student is absent more than 2 days with no notice, the Administration Officer will phone parents for an explanation on the third day of absence.

## 10 PROCEDURE – EXEMPTIONS AND LEAVE

### 10.1 Principal's Authority

- (a) The Principal may grant:
- Exemption from Attendance, or part day exemptions, for up to 100 days in a 12 month period;
  - Leave of Absence; or
  - An exemption to leave school (Exemption from Enrolment) following the completion of Year 9 to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship,
- where they believe this to be in the best interests of the child.
- (b) The Principal has the right to cancel the Certificate of Exemption where they identify circumstances they believe warrant this action.

- (c) The Principal cannot delegate his or her authority to grant and / or cancel exemptions.

For further information and support, the Principal may contact: AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation.

Ref: AIS Exemption Guidelines

### 10.2 Exemptions from Attendance

- (a) An Exemption from Attendance may be considered in exceptional circumstances such as: ill health; student employment in the entertainment industry; student participation in elite arts or sport.
- (b) The process for considering an application for exemption is:
- The parent requests the 'Application for Exemption From Attendance at School' form from the School Office, and returns the completed form to the school, with supporting documents.
  - The Principal reviews the application against the criteria in the DET guidelines.
  - A Certificate of Exemption is awarded (if the application is supported, including dates or times of non-attendance, and any special conditions), and the original given to parent.
  - A copy of the application, certificate and Minister's delegation is kept in the student's file.
  - The roll is marked with Code 'M' for the period of exemption for that student.
- (c) Should the approval not be granted, notice will be given in writing in time for the parent to appeal the decision in writing and/ or in person according to the principles of procedural fairness which are followed in all similar matters. (See: Complaints policy)
- (d) An Application for Exemption from school attendance totalling 100 days or more in a twelve month period is to be forwarded to: The AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation.
- (e) An Exemption from Attendance cannot be granted for absence from school for travel purposes.

### 10.3 Application for Leave

Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. Holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods are indicated as absences. Reasons may include such as misadventure or family events.

- (a) Families must complete an Application for Leave for absences within school terms.
- (b) If the Principal grants leave, the code 'L' is marked in the roll. If a certificate is not issued, 'A' is recorded in the roll.

- (c) If an absence >50 days is proposed, the student may be eligible to enrol in Distance Education School – a transfer of enrolment from RCC to a distance education school.
- (d) NOTE: Leave cannot be granted retrospectively.

### 10.4 Monitoring Exemptions

- (a) The Principal monitors the period of exemption or leave granted, including any special conditions applying to the Certificate, via the Student Attendance Percentage Report.

## 11 PROCEDURE – UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

### 11.1 Monitoring Unsatisfactory Attendance

- (b) Unsatisfactory attendance may include frequent absences, or a pattern of lateness or absences, even if notification is provided.
- (c) The Principal oversees proceedings in cases of unsatisfactory attendance in respect of student welfare/ pastoral care and continuing enrolment issues.  
The Heads of School and teachers follow up absences in respect of pastoral care and missed schoolwork.

The Administration Officer follows up absences to complete administration requirements; and will notify the Principal of a student's pattern of frequent absences.

The School Counsellor may be included in follow up of welfare issues.

A Student Attendance Percentage Report will be generated from SEQTA by administration staff and emailed each week to Heads of School, Deputy Principal and the Principal reporting student days absent or late arrival.

Student absence of more than 5 days per term (10%) are reviewed by the Heads of School and the following action is taken:

If a student's attendance falls below 90% (with unexplained or unacceptable reasons for absence), the Head of School will phone the parents and send the first formal warning letter.

The Head of School will continue to monitor the student's attendance. If the student's attendance falls below 80%, the Head of School will send the second formal warning letter and inform the Deputy Principal. The Head of School will arrange a meeting with the parents, Head of School and Deputy Principal.

The Deputy Principal will monitor the student's attendance after the second formal letter is sent. If a student's attendance falls below 70%, the Deputy Principal will inform the Principal. The Principal will meet with the parents and notify the appropriate authorities.

Any issues related to absenteeism must be recorded on SEQTA in the welfare section.

If a student has a pattern of unexplained absences, or a pattern of unacceptable school (or class) attendance even with an explanation from parents, the Head of School will liaise with homeroom teachers.

The Learning support teacher may also be consulted to address the needs of students and to assist with the development of intervention strategies.

- (d) Unsatisfactory attendance is noted in SEQTA and notified to parents. A meeting may be set up to discuss intervention strategies. Confidential notes are kept by the Principal, Deputy and/or Head of School in a restricted file in SEQTA.
- (e) Should a pattern of non-attendance cause staff to have concerns for a student's welfare, they will notify the Principal of their concerns who will follow the Child Protection protocols for Mandatory Reporting. (Absences greater than 30/100 days may signal Educational Neglect)
- (f) The school shall discuss appropriate intervention strategies with parents to assist the regular attendance of their child/ren at school.
- (g) The school may request assistance from the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) and the AIS NSW to resolve poor school attendance.
- (h) When a student has frequent medical absences, the Principal may:
  - consult with parents regarding the health care of the student
  - seek medical certificates
  - if ongoing concerns, seek approval of the parents to contact the student's medical practitioner, so that the school has all relevant information for the student's health care needs.

Chapter 16A of the Children and Young People (Care and Protection) Act 1998 permits sharing of information concerning the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people.

### 11.2 Intervention Strategies

Strategies to improve attendance may include a whole school campaign directed to parents and/ or students; or responsive strategies to address particular needs of a student, or group of students.

Intervention strategies proceed along a continuum through to legal measures to return a child to school.

- (a) Whole school, proactive strategies designed to support student engagement in school and learning across the school that leads to regular school attendance includes:
  - Core focus on:
    - Parent partnership – supporting and encouraging parents in their responsibility for raising their children; setting

- Academic Growth – encouraging students to develop courage and resilience, to not fear failure and to take appropriate responsibility for their learning
  - Christian Discipleship – that their worth comes from God, not achievement
- Setting high expectations for attendance and a clear and consistent message
  - A range of school studies and activities for student interests and abilities
  - Academic support - after school study assistance
  - Creative and technical programs
  - Wellbeing programs - student personal growth and development programs
  - Student pastoral care
- (b) Targeted intervention strategies to identify and support students at risk of developing attendance concerns include:
- Staff awareness and engaged support
  - Learning support and enrichment programs
  - Student welfare program
  - Family conference
  - Return to School Plan – strategies to address particular issues, determine a workable way forward and to source additional help as required
- (c) Attendance improvement planning may include.
- Identification of issues and strategies to address them
  - Ongoing support
  - Regular review
  - Collaboration with external professionals

(See: AIS Guide to Attendance and Attendance Intervention Strategies (AIS website))

### 11.3 Return to School Plan

A Return to School plan for a student is an individualised, flexible attendance plan with the aim of returning the student to full attendance. (See Student Welfare Policy) The goal is to assist all students to attend every day and achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.

- (a) A Return to School plan shall be facilitated in consultation with the parents and child, the Head of School and any other relevant professionals, to develop strategies to assist attendance, and appropriate learning tasks.
- (b) The Head of School shall maintain a Register of Return to School plans for follow up.



- (c) The Head of School shall inform Admin staff of a student commencing a Return to School plan, or pursuing a flexible timetable, to ensure proper Codes are entered in the Attendance Register.
- (d) If there is a risk of RoSA outcomes not being met, the Principal shall be informed.

### 11.4 Continued Unsatisfactory Attendance

- (a) The Education Act provides for the implementation of compulsory schooling conferences, compulsory schooling orders and ultimately prosecution where the school's attendance improvement measures have failed to effect improved attendance.
- (b) The Compulsory Schooling Conference is the final school-based intervention that can be taken to address matters of unsatisfactory school attendance. The meeting is designed to be a conciliatory process to assist families to meet attendance requirements. The AIS can help with convenors for the meeting.
- (c) In the case of no improvement to attendance, the school shall make these processes known to parents for their consideration if they wish to continue enrolment of their child/ren at the school.

See: *AIS Guide to School Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning*. This document includes intervention strategies, and templates for plans and letters.

### 11.5 Disengagement from the School

- (a) If further attendance intervention is rejected by parents, the Principal shall discuss the parents' continuing partnership with the school, and the student's enrolment options.
- (b) Where communication with the parents fails:
  - i. a formal letter shall be sent asking them to contact the school;
  - ii. if no response within seven (7) days, a letter shall be sent requesting parents/ guardians to make an appointment to discuss the situation with the Principal, including the consequence of Termination of Enrolment if there is no response;
  - iii. if no response within seven (7) days, a letter of Termination of Enrolment shall be sent.
- (c) All meetings and decisions shall be documented.

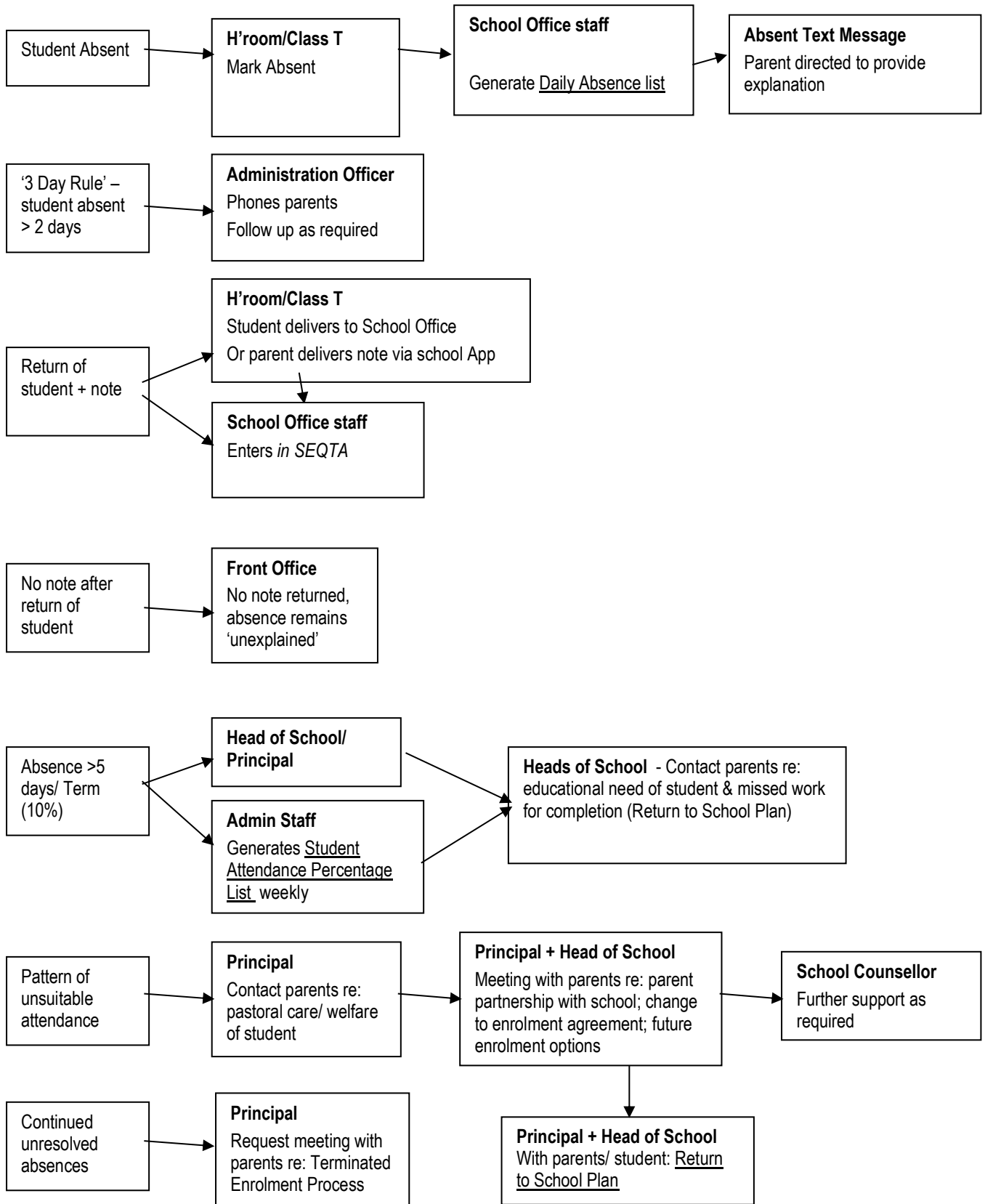
## FORMS

See: AIS NSW / Resource Centre ([www.aisnsw.edu.au](http://www.aisnsw.edu.au)), includes:

- Applications for Exemptions/ Leave
- Certificates

- Templates for letters and forms
- Information for parents

12 FLOWCHART – FOLLOW UP OF ABSENCES



## 13 PROCEDURE - REPORTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

### 13.1 External Reporting

- Attendance data is reported in the school's Annual Report
- Schools are required to report enrolment and attendance data for Semester 1 and Term 3 – Schools Hub Portal
- Student attendance data must be collected and reported according to the annual standards outlined by ACARA.

Assistance for non-government schools is found in the SSP Student Attendance (STATS) Collection guidelines.

### 13.2 Maintenance of Records

#### School Attendance Record requirements:

<i>Document</i>	<i>Retention Period</i>
Enrolment Register	Retain permanently (min. 5y before archiving) School Pro/SEQTA automatically retains records permanently.
Attendance Register (Roll) – Manual or Electronic	Retain for a minimum period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made. Store the registers (rolls) in a secure store for the specified timeframe.
Notes and records of verbal explanations of absence from parents	Retain for seven (7) calendar years.
All documents relating to Exemptions/ Leave filed in student file	Retain for seven (7) calendar years, or till student aged 25 years, whichever is greater, then destroy
The student's report card detailing the number of absences each year	Retain for seven (7) calendar years after the student has left.
In the case where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report	All attendance records should be retained until the year student is 25 years old.
Return to School plans & documented meetings	Retain until the year student is 25 years old.

**14 TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Evidence of Compliance</i>
<b>Principal</b>	
Maintain a Register of Enrolments	School Pro/SEQTA Administrative System
Maintain an Attendance Register in a form approved by the Minister, documenting absences; kept available for inspection	Class Rolls; SEQTA records
Ensure procedures for a safe environment and pastoral care for students	Child Protection/ student welfare/ WHS policies
Ensure procedures to record attendance and to monitor absences	This document Student records
Ensure procedures for exercising the Minister’s delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act to grant leave of absence; and maintain records	SEQTA Student records
Communicate the school’s attendance requirements	Enrolment agreement; procedures of this policy
Overview of attendance registers; procedures; Staff training	SEQTA procedural review
<b>Administration Officer</b>	
Maintenance of records	SEQTA
Follow up unexplained absences	Unexplained Absences List; correspondence
‘3 Day Rule’ call parents after 2d student absence	SEQTA
Report patterns of significant absences	Student Attendance Percentage Report;
<b>Heads of School</b>	
Consult/ preparation of attendance intervention	Intervention plans
Enforce current procedures; Follow up welfare	SEQTA secure confidential files
Teacher training	CPL calendar; staff meetings
Contact parents for student welfare & missed schoolwork 3 <sup>rd</sup> day	SEQTA
Collaborative Return to School plans	Notes re: parent meetings; Return to School Plan;
<b>Teachers</b>	
Daily attendance rolls	SEQTA
Pastoral care of students	Teacher records; SEQTA comments
Communication with parents re: child’s education & well-being	Parent-teacher meetings; reports; file notes
<b>School Office Staff</b>	
Maintain rolls & update School Pro records; receive notes + Skoolbag App notifications; communicate to staff	School Pro/SEQTA; student files
<b>School Counsellor</b>	
Pastoral care of students	SEQTA; Confidential Counsellor records
<b>Parents</b>	
Ensure their school-aged child attends school	Enrolment Terms of Agreement
Explain absence of child within 7 days	Filed notes; SEQTA
Apply in advance for Certificate of Exemption	Student records; SEQTA

## 15 APPENDIX – NSW MINISTER’S CODE FOR ATTENDANCE REGISTER 2015

The tables on the following pages indicate:

- Attendance Register Codes – Explanation of student absence
- Attendance Register Codes – Variation in attendance

Schools must use the following symbols to record an absence or variation in attendance, *in addition* to the appropriate attendance register code shown on the following pages.

Symbol	Meaning
a	The student was absent for the whole day
Pa	The students was late or was absent for part of the day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

NESA requires that the register of enrolments must be retained for a minimum of five (5) years before archiving. The register of daily attendance must be retained for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made.

**Attendance Register Codes – Explanation of student absence**

The following attendance register codes are to be used to record the explanation of student absence and **are counted** for statistical purposes.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence		
Symbol	Meaning	Notes
<b>A</b>	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.	To be also used if the principal <b>does not</b> accept that an absence (e.g. for extended leave/travel during school term) is in the student's best interests and that the reason is unjustified.
<b>S</b>	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.</li> </ul>	
<b>L</b>	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member</li> <li>- attendance at funerals</li> <li>- travel in Australia and overseas</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>	Note that this code is to be used if the reason for the absence (e.g. extended leave/travel) <b>is accepted</b> by the principal.  The principal may consider an Application for Extended Leave/Travel from parents, and provide a Certificate for Extended Leave/Travel, if approved.
<b>E</b>	The student was suspended from school	

**Attendance Register Codes – Variation in attendance**

## Attendance Policy

Only the following attendance register codes must be used to record a variation in attendance – they are **not** counted as an absence for statistical purposes. In addition to recording the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the variation must be recorded.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence		
Symbol	Meaning	Notes
<b>M</b>	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.	
<b>F</b>	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HSC Pathways Program</li> <li>- Best Start Assessments</li> <li>- Trial or HSC examinations</li> <li>- VET courses</li> </ul>	The “F” code is no longer only for senior students participating in a flexible timetable. The code should also be used in independent schools for students attending external tutorial centres and other programs that are school authorised.
<b>B</b>	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work experience</li> <li>- school sport (representative events)</li> <li>- school excursions</li> <li>- student exchange</li> </ul>	The ‘B’ code is used for sport when the student has been selected to represent the school at an event. If the student is participating at an elite level (state or national squads), consideration may be given to an Exemption from Attendance (Elite Sports/Arts)
<b>H</b>	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tutorial centre and programs</li> <li>- behaviour schools</li> <li>- juvenile justice</li> <li>- hospital schools</li> <li>- distance education</li> </ul>	In most cases this code will only be used by government schools, with the exception of students from non-government schools attending hospital schools.  The “F” code, not the “H” code is to be used by independent schools for students attending external tutorial centres and programs that are school authorised.