Context

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

Policy

1. Section 21B of the Education Act 1990 requires students between the ages of six and 17 to be enrolled at a government or registered non-government school and to attend that school whenever instruction is provided, or to be registered with the Board of Studies for home schooling.

2. All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided.

3. The exception is if a child completes Year 10 they must be enrolled in an approved educational training program or above 15 years of age in paid work or a combination of work and educational training.

4. Section 24 of the Act requires Principals to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Attendance registers must be available to authorised officers at all times.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered non-government school, or for registering them with the Board of Studies for home schooling;
- ensuring that their children who are enrolled at school attend regularly;
- explaining their children’s absences promptly to the school;
- taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.
**Principals are responsible for ensuring that:**

- clear information is provided to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- parents are advised promptly when their children are absent from school without explanation;
- accurate records of student attendance are maintained in an approved format;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- school personnel are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.

**School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:**

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students’ sense of belonging to the school community;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise;
- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- contacting parents in special circumstances concerning their child’s absence or pattern of lateness.

### School Attendance Records Requirements

**School attendance records must include:**

- a Register of Admission to be retained permanently;
- notes and records of verbal explanations for absences from parents. This advice is to be retained for two years from the date of receipt;
- an Attendance Register to be retained for three years. In a case where the students has an accident necessitating an accident report, all attendance records should be retained until the year the student reaches the age of 24 years;
- a records of the attendance at each lesson, to be retained until the end of the school year;
- all Class Rolls are to be retained for seven years after the students have left the school. As noted above, in a case where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report, that student’s Class Roll should be retained until the student’s 24th birthday.
**ATTENDANCE REGISTERS (ROLLS)**

- The *Education Act 1990* (Section 24) requires that attendance registers (rolls) be maintained in a form approved by the Minister. At Clancy Catholic College electronic rolls are used.

- Attendance registers must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.

- The exception method (making absences only) is to be followed by all staff at Clancy Catholic College. Section A detailed explanation of the meaning of each code appears in Roll Satchell.

- School attendance must be recorded on the electronic attendance register during Morning Administration.

- Pastoral teachers will collect notes from Parents explaining all absences.

- Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school or by the Catholic Education Office must be marked absent with the appropriate code.

- In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure will be recorded electronically at the front office.

- The teacher responsible for maintaining the roll is required to sign a hard copy each fortnight acknowledging it is accurate.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

*Rolls must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:*

- full day industrial action involving teachers;
- approved school development days;
- when the school is inaccessible due to natural occurrences such as fire or flood.

*On days as outlined above, a Special Circumstances Register is to be maintained. This should:*

- specify the date and time of the variation;
- indicate the reason for the variation;
- list students attending on that day;
- be signed by the Pastoral teacher;

On these days, a broken line must be ruled through the day’s column and a notation “**Roll not marked – see Special Circumstances Register**” recorded within.

Refer to Appendix B for a sample of the Special Circumstances Register.
CONTACTING PARENTS

- If a student has been absent from school for three consecutive school days, and the Pastoral Teacher has not received any notification, on the third day of absence the Pastoral Teacher must contact one of the student’s parents by telephone. Parents’ work and mobile telephone numbers are available on Sentral.

- Parents should also be notified if a pattern of lateness or absences becomes evident.

PROCESSES FOR ADDRESSING ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

The following processes will be enacted to help minimise absences.

1. Notes will be collected for each absence by the Pastoral Teacher.

2. At the commencement of each year a letter will go out to Parents explaining the expectations on student attendance and the process followed when these expectations are not met. This will also be presented at Information nights.

3. Year Coordinators will issue an attendance report to Pastoral Teachers on a fortnightly basis.

4. If a student has had 5 days absence: The Pastoral Teacher is to question the student as to why they have had the days off. The Pastoral Teacher is to put a note to parents in the student diary outlining the College concerns.

5. If a student has been absent for ten days: The Year Coordinator will issue a letter to Parents informing them of this and follow up with a phone call home (formal notification).

6. When a student has been absent for 15 days: The Year Coordinator will organise a meeting with parents and develop an attendance plan.

* For the above steps some discretion will be exercised when formal leave has been applied for or documented evidence of illness has been presented to the College.

** The College will track patterns among families who take holidays outside of school holiday periods each year.

SECURITY OF ROLLS

- Rolls must be stored in a secure location in the school – at Clancy Catholic College, the designated area Sentral for electronic version and the office for the hard copy.

- Rolls must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood.

- At the end of each year the Principal must ensure that the roll and attached Special Circumstances Registers are preserved as a complete record of students’ absences for that year.
**School Sports Rolls**

- School sport is an integral part of the curriculum. Attendance monitoring practices at school sport are necessary to ensure the safety of students.

- Specific sports rolls must be marked at the beginning and conclusion of each sports session. Attendance information contained on sports rolls must be transferred to the Pastoral Roll. The procedure to be followed at Clancy Catholic College is:
  - on return from sport, teachers are to place the sports rolls in the Sports Coordinator’s pigeonhole;
  - the Sports Coordinator will interview students who did not attend the correct sport/area, and will impose a suitable discipline;
  - the Sports Coordinator will place in each Pastoral Teachers’ pigeonhole a list of students from their Pastoral Class who were absent from sport;
  - Pastoral Teachers will indicate this particular absence on the roll and follow the school’s procedures if a fractional truancy has occurred.

**Suspended Students**

- The appropriate symbol for suspension (E) is to be used to denote the absences of students whilst on suspension. This symbol is to be used only for the duration of the suspension and must not be applied to students who fail to return to school following the suspension period.

- The absences of students who are suspended are counted as absences for statistical purposes.

**Definitions**

1. *Parent* includes a guardian or other person having the care or custody of a child or young person.

2. An *unexplained absence* is one where a parent provides no acceptable reason for a student’s non-attendance.

3. *Truancy* is the absence of a student from school without the knowledge or permission of their parent or carer.
ATTENDANCE HOURS

Students are expected to be at school from 8.30am to 2.55pm each day except for Tuesday which has a finishing time of 2.30pm.

If students are partially absent for a day or absent for a whole day, there must be a justification for the absence by the parent/carer. The Principal will have the final say on whether an explanation is justified as an absence.

Pastoral Teachers are expected to follow the guidelines of the College when taking the roll each morning.

EXEMPTION FROM ATTENDING SCHOOL

1.1 Section 25 of the Education Act 1990 delegated the power to grant and cancel certificates of exemption from being enrolled in and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances to the principal.

1.2 Exemptions during the year can be granted for exceptional domestic circumstances, exceptional circumstances such as health, employment in the entertainment industry and participation in elite sporting events.

1.3 Parents must apply for a certificate of exemption using the forms from the College and submit them to the Principal for approval.

1.4 All copies of certificates of exemption are kept with school/student files.

PARENTS REQUESTING LEAVE

1. The student should approach their Year Coordinator at least 4 weeks before the requested leave with a note outlining the reason for leave.

2. Year Coordinators are asked to give the note to the Principal’s secretary for processing.

3. The Principal will approve leave or deny the leave. If approved, the Principal will issue a Certificate for Exemption/Leave from Attendance at School, together with the students work to be completed on leave form.

4. The Year Coordinator hands the approved certificate and work to be completed form to the student

5. The Year Coordinator follows up and returns the “work to be completed while on leave” details to the Principal’s Secretary. (NB: This information is required for Census).

6. Once this has been completed the Principal’s Secretary will collate and place a copy of all forms in the student’s file.
## Section A

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN NSW CATHOLIC SYSTEMIC SCHOOLS PROCEDURES

**Note:** The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>The student was absent on that day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence

**Note:** The following symbols should be recorded above the a or Pa symbol as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The student’s absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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:  
  - work experience  
  - school sport (regional and state carnivals)  
  - school excursions. |
| E      | The student was suspended from school. |
| F      | Year 11 or 12 student participating in flexible timetable not present because they are not required to be at school.  
  Or  
  Student who has completed Year 10 but is below the age of 17 years participating in:  
  - approved education or training, or  
  - if the child is of or above the age of 15 years paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work. |
| H      | The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis in line with Diocesan Policy.  
  The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school, such as:  
  - tutorial centre and programs  
  - behaviour schools |
### STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN NSW CATHOLIC SYSTEMIC SCHOOLS
#### PROCEDURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| L    | Principals may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the principal’s discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student’s absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to:  
- misadventure or unforeseen event  
- participation in special events not related to the school  
- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member  
- attendance at funerals  
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions. |
| M    | The student was exempted from attending school. (See Guidelines for Exemption from Attendance at NSW Catholic Systemic Schools) |
| S    | The student’s absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical appointment. In these cases:  
- a medical certificate is provided or  
- 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 duration of the absence is more than four days. |
Date: ______________________________

Reason for maintaining this Special Circumstances Register: ____________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Teacher maintaining this record: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name</th>
<th>Pastoral Class</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
<th>Departure</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This record must be permanently attached to the Class Roll.

Signature of Teacher: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________