



# ST. MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, COHUNA ATTENDANCE MONITORING POLICY

## 1. Vision

The vision for Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Limited) is to provide, in partnership with our families, stimulating, enriching, liberating and nurturing learning environments in each of the Catholic school communities within the Diocese. At the heart of this vision is our commitment to the ongoing duty of care that we have for the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all children and young people.

We believe:

- that the values of the Gospel are central to who we are, what we do, and how we act
- in leadership encompassing vision, innovation and empowerment.

## 2. Background

Schedule 4 clause 10 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 require that schools have policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to follow up unexplained absences.

CES Limited requires all Sandhurst Catholic Schools to adopt this Attendance Policy that outlines how to record and monitor attendance and absences in order to ensure continuity of learning and meet the duty of care owed to students, as well as the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*.

Attendance monitoring helps to ensure the safety of students while engaged in school activities. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of the document is to outline the school's policy and procedures in relation to attendance monitoring of students to ensure the safety of students while engaged in school activities.

## 4. Scope/Application

This school is a Sandhurst Catholic School which operates with the consent of the Bishop of Sandhurst and is owned and operated by CES Limited. This Policy forms part of the Duty of Care Framework which is available at [www.smcohuna.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smcohuna.catholic.edu.au). This policy applies to students, parents, guardians and/or carers, staff and Principal of this school. This Policy must be read in conjunction with [CES Limited's Student Behaviour Policy](#) which contains strategies for improving attendance.

## 5. Policy Statement

- 5.1** In accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*, schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years unless an exemption has been granted.
- 5.2** Parents, guardians and/or carers must enrol a child of compulsory school age at a registered school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction.
- 5.3** Students are expected to attend the school during normal school hours every day of each term, unless:
- there is an approved exemption from school attendance or attendance and enrolment for the student, or
  - the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

The principal may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduce to less than full time in accordance with [DET Guidelines](#).

- 5.4** Regular school attendance is vital for all children and young people to succeed in education and missing school days can have a big impact on a child's future. We are committed to working with the school community, parent, guardians and/or carers to encourage and support full school attendance. Parents, guardians and or carers experiencing attendance issues with a child, must notify the classroom teacher so that we can work together to get your child to school every day.
- 5.5** Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children through the reporting and monitoring of absenteeism is the responsibility of both parents, guardian and/or carer and the school. Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.
- 5.6** All Victorian schools are required to contact parents, guardians and/or carers as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained student absence. If your child is

absent on a particular day and you have not contacted the school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

- 5.7** The school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parent/guardians to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.
- 5.8** Parent, guardians and/or carers must promptly notify the school of student absences and provide a reason for absence on each occasion. The school will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*.
- 5.9** The school must check and record the daily attendance of all students. Teaching staff are required to monitor and record attendance of all students twice per day in every class including school excursions and identify and report absences from school or class.
- 5.10** The school must follow up unexplained absences on the day of a student's absence and keep a record of the reason for absence.
- 5.11** The school must maintain current contact details for parent, guardians and/or carers and notify parent, guardians and/or carers of unsatisfactory attendance and accurately record attendance on student files.

## **6. Procedures**

- 6.1** This School's classroom teachers are required to monitor and record attendance of all students at least twice a day and including during school excursions and report absences from school or class.
- 6.2** At this school, attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher during first session of the day (9.00am) and after lunch (2.20pm) using SIMON attendance register.
- 6.3** If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, guardian and/or carer, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, the school will notify parents by SMS or phone. Administration Officer or classroom teacher will attempt to contact Parent, guardian and/or carer as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent, guardian and/or carer to respond. If contact cannot be made with the parent, guardian and/or carer (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence. The school will keep a record of the reason given for each absence.
- 6.4** If the school considers that the parent has provided a reasonable excuse for their child's absence, the absence will be marked as 'approved absence'. If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked

as 'unexplained absence' or 'parent choice unauthorised'. Parent, guardian and/or carer will be notified if an absence has not been approved.

**6.5** For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent, guardian and/or carer must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school. Parent, guardian and/or carer should notify the school of absences by:

- Informing the classroom teacher or school Principal in writing of a planned absence
- Contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence by
  - phoning the school on insert phone number and leaving a message
  - emailing the school insert email address
  - filling in the Student Absentee Form on our website insert web address
  - entering the absence on our Parent Portal insert portal used
- Late arrivals or early departures must be entered via the insert portal used at the administration office. If a parent, guardian and/or carer is unable to do so, a note must be provided
- If an absence is regularly approved by parent, guardian and/or carer as 'illness/medical' a medical certificate may be required..
- If a student will be having an extended absence i.e. family holiday, a letter will be required from parent, guardian and/or carer .

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Role of the School Principal**

- a) Implement and review the school's attendance policy as part of their Student Engagement Policy
- b) Document whole-school plan to promote full attendance in accordance with CES Limited's Student Behaviour Framework
- c) Maintain an up to date attendance register
- d) Maintain current contact details for parents ,guardians and/or carers
- e) Maintain accurate attendance records on student files
- f) Ensure that a check and record of daily attendance of all students
- g) Ensure student attendance is recorded twice per day
- h) Record, in writing, the reason given for each absence
- i) Identify and follow up unexplained absences on the day of a student's absence
- j) Advise parents, guardians and/or carers of unexplained

absences, as soon as practicable on the same day of the absence, including for post-compulsory aged students

- k) Identify the person(s) with responsibility for monitoring daily attendance
- l) Ensure staff are provided with training and development opportunities in promoting and recording attendance and following up absences.
- m) Ensure the Policy is made publicly available.
- n) Provide reports to the Executive Director CES Limited on the Policy and its implementation as required.

## 7.2 Role of the Catholic Education Sandhurst (CES Limited) Board

- Receive reports from Executive Director on implementation and compliance across all Sandhurst Catholic Schools
- Review and assess reports received by the Executive Director on attendance.

## 8. Policy Approval

### 8.1 Policy Approval Authority:

CES Limited Board

### 8.2 Officer Responsible for Policy:

- The Executive Director of CES Limited
- Assistant to the Director: Pastoral Wellbeing

## Review

This Attendance Policy is scheduled for review every three years, or more frequently if required.

## Related Documents and Other Resources

- **Insert School Name** Student Behaviour Policy
- CES Limited Student Behaviour Framework
- [Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#)
- CES Limited Enrolment Framework
- CES Limited attendance promotion materials

- CES Limited Non-attendance / School refusal materials
- [CECV School Attendance - Every Day Counts](#)
- [CECV Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#)
- [CECV Record of Review - Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#)
- [DET School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\).](#)

<b>Responsibility for Policy</b>	Executive Director CES Limited Assistant to the Director: Pastoral Wellbeing School Principal
<b>Approval Authority</b>	CES Limited Board
<b>Approval date</b>	October 2020
<b>Date of next review</b>	October 2023