



The Coast Christian School
a ministry of Coast Community Church

The Coast Christian School

Student Attendance Policy and Procedures

2017

Document No:	20173101
Publication Date:	January 2017
Replaces Document & No:	Student Attendance and Class Roll Marking Policy 20151612
Contact:	Alison Graeve
Review Date:	Annual cycle: January 2018
Status:	Active

ATTENDANCE POLICY and PROCEDURES

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Legal requirements

In NSW, under current legislation, all children between the ages of 6 and the minimum leaving age of 17 are required to attend school on all designated school days.

Parental responsibilities

Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child complies with the legal requirement to attend school. This may be:

- To be enrolled at and to attend a government school or a registered non-government school, or
- To be registered for Home schooling with the Board of Studies and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject
- To explain the absence of their child within 7 days and to apply in advance for a Certificate of Exemption for any exceptional absence

School responsibilities

Schools have an important responsibility in maintaining a safe and supportive environment for students. Their role in monitoring and recording attendance involves:

- Providing clear and up to date information to both students and parents/caregivers regarding attendance and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- Maintaining clear and concise attendance records
- Encouraging and enforcing regular attendance
- Supporting parents by monitoring attendance and contacting parents in the case of unexplained absences
- Requesting assistance if required from Liaison Officers or regional Attendance Officers and the Department of Education and Communities for support to resolve unacceptable attendance
- Providing procedures that follow procedural fairness guidelines in all circumstances

Principal's Responsibilities

The Principal of The Coast Christian School has the responsibility and authority to grant:

- Sick leave to students whose absence is genuinely due to illness
- Exemption from School Attendance for up to a total of 100 days in any 12 month period for any one student
- Exemption from School Attendance for part-day exemptions for periods totaling up to 100 days in a 12 month period

2.0 PROCEDURES

2.1 REGISTER OF ENROLMENTS

The Register of Enrolments is kept in paper form in a document known as an “Admissions Register” and, commencing July 2015, on SchoolPRO2 the TCCS Student Management System. Information prior to July 2015 is filed in the TCCS School Office and is monitored by the TCCS Registrar. The register of enrolments is monitored by the TCCS Registrar.

The Register of Enrolments is retained for a minimum of five years preceding the current date. Enrolment forms that are not currently in use are filed in the School’s archives.

Based on information provided in the Enrolment Application, the Register of Enrolments includes the following information for each student:

- Name, age and address
- The name and contact telephone numbers of parents/guardians
- The date of enrolment, and where appropriate, the date of leaving the School and the student’s destination school.
- For students older than 6 years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation.
- Where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that a Department of Education and Communities officer with Home School Liaison responsibilities will be notified of the student’s full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents’ names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student. A record of this notification will be kept in the Register of Enrolments.
- The Home School Liaison Officer is contactable on 4348 9106.
- Staff are notified of the new student’s enrolment or the exiting student’s enrolment by the Registrar via email.

2.2 CLASS ROLLS and ATTENDANCE

TCCS will monitor the daily attendance/absence of students by:

1. Maintaining traditional paper rolls as well as electronic class rolls which contain:
 - i. noting of only absences in accordance with the directions outlined in the roll
 - ii. reason for absence in accordance with the directions and codes outlined in the roll (the common code approved by the Minister must be used)
 - iii. documentation from parent/guardian to substantiate reason for absence from school or class. This documentation will include:
 1. child’s name and class
 2. date of absence
 3. reason for absence
 4. signature of parent/carer
2. Marking the class rolls each day, in the first 15 minutes of the day, and in accordance with current NSW Attendance Codes. The class roll should be kept in the classroom. Class Rolls are known to be the booklets printed by the Government and has EDU338900 printed on its front cover.
3. Contacting parents daily if no reason has been provided for their child’s absence

from School:

-At 9am each morning, two student leaders will take a daily rollcall sheet to each classroom.

-The teacher circles the name of any students who have been absent from their class up until this time.

-This list is taken to the School Office where it is checked against a list of emails and phone calls from parents notifying the School of their child's absence. In the event of there being no phone call or email, the Receptionist will SMS the family to advise that the child is not at School, to request a reason and to remind the parent to put the notice and reason for absenteeism in writing: "Your child, [child's name] was marked absent today. Please submit a written explanation via email or skoolbag. TCCS."

4. Recording attendance information in SchoolPRO2 by the Registrar each day.
5. Recording late arrivals/leaving early each day:
 - Students arriving late (after the 8:50am bell has sounded) or leaving early (prior to the 2:50pm bell) must sign in at the Front Office.
 - The parent completes a Yellow form "Absentee Notice for part of a day only". (*Appendix A: Yellow Parent/Carer's form*)
 - The late arrival/leaving early notice is recorded on SchoolPRO2 by the Receptionist.
 - The child or parent takes the Yellow note to the class teacher who will record the late arrival/leaving early as a partial absence, noting the time of arrival/departure in the back of the roll. The Yellow note is retained in the class roll by the teacher.
 - A "Consistently late to school" letter is sent to parents when a child is arriving late to school on a consistent level (*Appendix B: Consistently late to School letter*)
6. Marking class lists at special events such as sporting carnivals, excursions and off-site activities and transcribing information into paper rolls by the class teacher and SchoolPRO2 by the Office staff by the next day.
7. Maintaining the privacy of information in the rolls in accordance with the TCCS Privacy Policy
8. Retaining the class rolls and documentation for 7 years after the last entry was made
9. Recording explanations for absences and retaining absence notes WITH the class roll. This is done by the class teacher.
10. Following up unexplained absences:
 - the teacher requests a note of explanation from the student and the parent each day and for 3 days following the student's return to School.
 - a TCCS White form "Absentee Notice for 1 or more days" is to be given to parents by the teacher to provide an explanation of an absence. (*Appendix A: White Parent/Carers form*)
 - the Office staff will collect all paper rolls once each week to check for students who still have outstanding unexplained absences.
 - the Office staff will send an Absentee Notice via email to the parents requesting an explanation for the absence (*Appendix C: Absentee Notice*)
 - if no explanation is provided within 7 days of the last day of the absence it is recorded as an unexplained absence.
 - if a note of explanation is provided after 21 days of the last day of the absence, the absence remains recorded as unexplained.

2.3 UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is fundamental to student learning. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve educational success, and increase their career and life options.

Student attendance has been identified as an important aspect of a student's wellbeing and failure

to receive an education has been identified as a risk of harm factor.

Poor patterns of attendance place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and disadvantage them in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations.

Communities benefit from students who regularly attend school and are achieving. These benefits include greater student safety, community wellbeing, and a sense of connectedness for all.

TCCS will monitor unsatisfactory attendance of students by:

1. Contacting parents/guardians regarding poor school and/or class attendance. This will be done by the classroom teacher. Unsatisfactory attendance is deemed when the teacher thinks it is interfering with the child's educational program. Should a student have a pattern of unexplained absence or any unsatisfactory attendance pattern, the Class teacher will phone home to seek a reason. The class teacher will advise the Principal of the outcome of this phone call.
2. Advising the Principal - The School Office staff will also draw the attention of the Principal as appropriate to any pattern of unsatisfactory attendance. A student's attendance is deemed as unsatisfactory when it falls below 80% within a school term, with the exception of a known illness or a Principal's approved leave of absence.
3. Transferring unsatisfactory attendance information to students' files. This is done by the TCCS Registrar.
4. Notifying the Principal of any patterns of non-attendance (lates or leave earlies included) that may cause staff to have concerns for a student's welfare. The Principal will follow the TCCS Child Protection protocols if applicable.
5. Once attendance issues are identified, the Principal will consider a range of strategies, including:
 - determining whether concerns about poor school attendance raise safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns requiring a report to Community Services or contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit
 - ensuring that identified students are connected with student welfare programs that support regular attendance and punctuality
 - reviewing curriculum content to maximise student engagement - initiating the prompt follow-up of absences
 - liaising with parents
 - referring to the school's learning support team or student welfare team
 - referring to external counselling services
 - seeking the support of a range of regional student services personnel and passing on relevant information related to reports to Community Services or contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit to the Home School Liaison Program
 - liaising (which can include exchanging information and/or coordinating services) with NSW Police Force, Department of Health, Department of Human Services NSW (including Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Housing NSW and Juvenile Justice) and other relevant community agencies where appropriate.

2.4 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

At TCCS Strategies for supporting and encouraging regular school attendance include:

1. Clear school process for roll marking (staff training) and follow up on absences procedures
2. School student welfare policy- Rewards/ encouragement awards
3. Regular newsletter articles promoting daily attendance
4. Phone contact with parents within 2 days of an unexplained absence
5. During Celebration Assemblies each term, students with exemplary attendance are recognised and presented with a Certificate.

2.5 EXEMPTION FROM ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

A child may be exempt from being enrolled at and attending school if the Principal is satisfied that conditions exist which make it necessary or desirable that a Certificate should be granted. A Certificate of Exemption may be given subject to conditions and limited to a period specified in the certificate.

A Certificate of Exemption must only be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student's best interests in the short and long term. Alternatives to exemption should have been fully explored.

A Certificate of Exemption will not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit or a child protection report to Family and Community Services and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm.

Parents make an application for Exemption from School by completing an Application for Exemption/Enrolment at School. This must be made in writing and in advance (*Appendix D & E: Application/Certificate for Exemption from School*).

Exemption from School will be granted for the following reasons:

- Exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
- The child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under the *Public Health Act 2010*.
- Employment in the entertainment industry.
- Participation in elite arts or elite sporting events.

Students travelling on holidays during school terms are not to be exempt and an exemption certificate is NOT issued. Parents requesting Extended Leave for vacation or travel must make application in writing and in advance. (*Appendix F & G: Application/Certificate for Extended Leave-Vacation/Travel*).

Parents will receive an answer of approval or otherwise using a modified form of the Certificate for Exemption developed for DEC schools. 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.

Copies of Applications and Certificates of Exemption and Extended Leave will be filed in the student's file by the Registrar.

2.6 APPENDIX

Appendix A: Yellow form - Absentee notice for 1 or more days; for part of a day only.

Appendix B: Consistently late to School letter

Appendix C: Absentee Notice

Appendix D: Application for Exemption from School

Appendix E: Certificate for Exemption from School

Appendix F: Application for Extended Leave-Vacation/Travel

Appendix G: Certificate of Extended Leave-Vacation/Travel

APPENDIX A



The Coast Christian School

FULL DAY ABSENCES

Absentee Notice for 1 or more days

This note should be completed by parents/ carers to inform the school when a child is away for **1 or more days**.

Name of student _____

Class teacher _____

Dates of absence _____

Reason for absence
The reason for absence must be shown below. Please tick the box and give details.

Sickness (please give details, eg flu)

Family reasons (please give details, eg attendance at a funeral)

Other reasons (please give details)

Name of parent/ carer

Signature of parent/ carer

Date



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PARTIAL DAY ABSENCES

Absentee Notice for part of a day only

This note should be completed by parents/ carers to inform the school when a child is away for **part of the day**.

Name of student _____

Class teacher _____

Parent/ carer please tick either arrived late or must leave early

Arrived late Time _____ Date _____

OR

Must leave early Time _____ Date _____

Reason for absence
The reason for absence must be shown below. Please tick the box and give details.

Sickness (please give details, eg flu)

Family reasons (please give details, eg attendance at a funeral)

Other reasons (please give details)

Name of parent/ carer

Signature of parent/ carer

Date

BM-21

Date ____/____/____

Dear Parent,

Your child, _____, Class: _____

has arrived late at the School _____ times during Term _____.

At TCCS school commences at **8:50am** each day. Arrival after 8:50am is considered to be a late arrival and is recorded in the TCCS Attendance Roll accordingly.

By being consistently late, your child is missing an important part of their learning as well as interrupting the learning of other students. The learning that occurs in the first part of the day is an essential part of a child's education and missing these lessons on a consistent basis can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning in the long term. For this reason we ask that you make every effort to have your child at school on time each day.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in this matter.

If you would like to discuss any concerns regarding your child's learning development, please contact the School Office on 4368 3377 to arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Yours faithfully,

Through the Principal
Mrs. Alison Graeve

Classroom Teacher

APPENDIX C

**ABSENTEE NOTICE
COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Date: _____

Dear _____

Your child, _____, was absent from school on _____ and no satisfactory explanation has been received. *The Education Act 1990* requires your child to attend school each day that instruction is provided unless prevented from doing so by sickness or other good reason. The Act requires you to explain your child's absences within seven days of their occurrence. Failure to do so will result in an unjustified absence being recorded.

Please provide an explanation in the space below and return this form to the school as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the school to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Alison Graeve
PRINCIPAL

REASON FOR ABSENCE:

.....
.....

Signed

Date

APPENDIX D

Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

To be completed by the student's parents

Student Details

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Age: _____ Date of birth: ____ (dd) / ____ (mm) / ____ (year)

Enrolment Registration Number (ERN): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

School name: _____

Date of exemption applied for: ____ / ____ / ____ to: ____ / ____ / ____

Number of school days: _____

Reason for application for exemption:

Please tick:

Exceptional domestic circumstances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Exceptional Circumstance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction under Section 42D of the <i>Public Health Act 1991</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment in entertainment industry/participation in elite sporting event for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide more detail about the reason for the application for exemption here:

NOTE: Where the reason for application for exemption includes long term travel arrangements of more than 20 school days, copies of travel documentation should be included with the application.

DETAILS OF PRIOR/CURRENT EXEMPTIONS (if applicable)

Date of prior/current exemption from: ____ / ____ / ____ to: ____ / ____ / ____

Number of school days: _____

Copy of Certificate of Exemption attached: (Please tick one box) Yes No

PARENT DETAILS

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone number: _____ Relationship to student: _____

As the parent of the above mentioned student, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Exemption from attendance at school, under the *Education Act 1990*. I understand that if the exemption is granted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption
- the exemption is limited to the period indicated
- the exemption is subject to the conditions listed on the Certificate of Exemption
- the exemption may be cancelled at any time.

I declare the information provided in this application for a certificate of exemption is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate and complete. I recognise that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognise that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the exemption may result in the exemption being revoked.

Signature of applicant/s: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

To be completed by the principal of the school where the exemption period requested exceeds 100 school days and forwarded to the delegate responsible for approval

Prior to forwarding this application for exemption from attendance at school to the delegate responsible for issuing the Certificate of Exemption (See page 4, *Guidelines for Exemption from School*), the principal should complete the following advice for the delegate.

I recommend that this application from attendance at school is (Please tick one box

Granted

Not granted

Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's name (please print): _____

Telephone number: _____

Signature of principal: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Note: Please complete the Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School if exemption is granted (Refer to Appendix 3.5).

APPENDIX E

**Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School under
Section 25 of the *Education Act 1990***

STUDENT DETAILS

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Date of birth: ____ (dd) / ____ (mm) / ____ (year)

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

School name: _____ School's telephone number: _____

Date of exemption from: ____ / ____ / ____ to: ____ / ____ / ____

Reason for the exemption:

Conditions of the exemption (note: for a part day exemption the hours of program participation must be specified, including the plan to have the student attend school full time).

It has been explained to the parent of the above mentioned student that they are responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption.

The parent understands that this exemption is limited to the period indicated, acknowledges that the exemption is subject to the conditions listed and that the exemption may be cancelled at any time.

Name and position of delegate: _____

Signature of delegate: _____ Date: ____/____/____

**This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced
when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers**

APPENDIX F



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Application for Extended Leave – Vacation / Travel

NOTE: PART A is to be completed by the student’s parent and returned to their child’s school principal

PART A : STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	SRN

Student address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

School name: _____

Dates of extended leave applied for: From: ___/___/___ to ___/___/___

Number of school days: _____

Reason for travel: _____

Relevant travel documents such as an e-ticket or itinerary (in the case of non-flight bound travel with Australia only) must be attached to this application.

PART A : DETAILS OF PRIOR EXEMPTIONS / EXTENDED LEAVE – VACATION / TRAVEL (if applicable)

Date of prior exemption / extended leave: From ___/___/___ to ___/___/___

Number of school days: _____

Yea Copy of Certification of Exemption / Extended Leave –Travel attached (Please tick) Yes NO



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PARENT DETAILS (Applicant)

Family name: _____ Given Name: _____

Address: _____ Postcode _____

Telephone number: _____ Relationship to student: _____

As the parent and applicant, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Extended Leave-Vacation/Travel and understand my child will be granted a period of extended leave upon acceptance by the principal of the reason provided.

I understand that if the application is accepted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of extended leave
- The provided period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated
- The provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed on the Certificate of extended Leave-Vacation/Travel
- The period of extended leave will count towards my child's absences from school

I declare the information provided in this application is the best of my knowledge and belief; accurate and complete. I recognise that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognise that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the Application for Extended Leave – Vacation/Travel may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.

Signature of parent/s: _____ Date: ____/____/____



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PART B: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL

I accept this Application for Extended Leave- Vacation/Travel

(Please tick) Yes NO

Please provide more detail here (if required)

Principal's name (please print): _____ Telephone number: _____

Signature of principal: _____ Date ___ / ___ / _____

Note: Please complete the Certificate of Extended Leave – Vacation/Travel if requested leave is to be approved.

APPENDIX G

Certificate of Extended Leave – Vacation / Travel

The student/s whose details appear below has been provided a period of extended leave from school for the purpose of travel.

Note: Where an application is made by a parent with more than one child a separate copy of this Certificate should be placed in each student's file.

STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	SRN

Student address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

School name: _____

School telephone: _____

Dates of extended leave applied for from: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Number of school days: _____

Reason for providing the period of extended leave – vacation / travel;

Conditions applicable to providing the period of extended leave – vacation/travel

It has been explained to the parent of the above mentioned student/s that they are responsible for his/her supervision during the period of extended leave.

The parent acknowledges that the period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated and acknowledges that the provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed.

Principal Name: _____ Principal Signature _____

Date: ____/____/____

This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.