



Penrith Christian School

Strive for the Highest

Attendance Policy

Policy and Procedure Management

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Status	Active
Audience	Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Visitors, Students, Board, Staff
Related Policies, Procedures, Work Instructions, Forms or Manuals	• Assessment Policy • Enrolment Policy • Student Behaviour Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1. Scope

Penrith Christian School is committed to providing a safe, secure, disciplined and quality learning environment in which students can develop their individual talents, interests and abilities through a curriculum that fosters the intellectual, physical, social and spiritual development of the student. Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students in maximising their God given potential. In partnership with parents and caregivers, the school is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students and encourages full attendance to the best extent possible for each student.

The School:

- i. maintains an enrolment register and daily attendance register.
- ii. records absence and variation to attendance using the Minister's codes.
- iii. has procedures in place to monitor student absence and student attendance data.
- iv. implements a range of intervention strategies to improve unsatisfactory attendance patterns.
- v. exercises the Minister's delegation for exemptions under section 25 of the NSW Education Act (1990).

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to identify the procedures implemented to meet legislative requirements and the roles and responsibilities of each of the key stakeholders. It includes details of the procedures used in exercising the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act 1990.

2. Definitions

Abandoned Enrolment or Destination Unknown	A circumstance where a student of Compulsory School Age has not attended school for 10 consecutive days and no explanation has been provided by the parent/carer.
Attendance Codes	Codes approved by the Minister of Education for use in recording the attendance of students. Please refer to School Attendance Register Codes
Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP)	Implemented to support a student whose attendance is of concern. This Plan should be developed with the student, parents/carers and any support staff or related organisations so they have ownership over the plan.

Attendance Register (Roll)	A record of the attendance of each student enrolled in a school for the period the student remains enrolled.
Flexible Timetable Leave Pass	The School implements a leave pass system for students who wish to leave school premises during normal school hours. This is generally reserved to applications made by senior students with no timetabled classes at the beginning or end of the school day.
Compulsory Attendance Plan (CAP)	Developed to address attendance when Attendance Improvement Plans (AIP) have not achieved a satisfactory improvement in the attendance of a student. These are a legal requirement as a step after AIPs and below the minimum school leaving age of 17. Exceptions apply – Compulsory School Age .
Compulsory School Attendance Conference (CSAC)	A conference where the School may request the Parents and relevant student to attend a conference to address poor attendance. PCS follows the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) process with respect to this. The Children's Court may also require a parent and/or a child to attend with other relevant persons.
Full-time student	A student who attends school on an average of 25 hours per week or more over the course of five weeks (minimum measure).
Minimum school leaving age	The age at which a child/young person completes year 10 or the age of 17 years whichever first occurs. A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education, but who is below the age of 17 years, is of compulsory school-age unless the child participates on a full-time basis in:
Part time student	A student who attends the school less than 25 hours per week.
Regular Attendance	A student attending school more than 90% of the time Primary and 85% of the time Secondary.
Seven day explanation rule	A parent must provide an explanation for student absence within seven days of the absence. If this occurs in conjunction with a term break they should provide the explanation before the end of term. Parents are encouraged to reply to SMS notifications to meet these obligations.
Suspension	Where a student is absent from school under the care and responsibility of their parent/carers. Suspension is usually a

	decision made to ensure the safety and well-being of all in the school environment. It has a set time frame around period of suspension. Suspension does not occur in school – this is withdrawal from class.
Truancy	The absence of a student from school without the knowledge or permission of their parent/carer.
Unexplained absence	An instance where a parent has not provided an explanation of the student's absence within seven days of the first day of the absence.
Unjustified absence	An absence where the parent has provided an explanation of the student's absence, but the explanation has not been accepted by the principal. A written notification of this is provided to the parent.

3. Legislative Requirements

The NSW Education Act (1990) sets out the compulsory schooling requirements for enrolment and attendance of students at school in NSW. Children of compulsory school age are required to be enrolled in, and attend, school or be registered for home schooling (section 22 of the Education Act). In NSW, the compulsory school age is from the age of 6 to 17.

Section 21B of the Act states that a child is of compulsory school age when the child is of or above the age of 6 years and below the minimum school leaving age.

The minimum school leaving age is:

- i. the age at which the child completes Year 10 of secondary education (subject to participation required by subsection (3)), or
- ii. the age of 17 years, whichever first occurs.

A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education but who is below the age of 17 years is of compulsory school age unless the child participates on a full-time basis in:

- i. approved education or training, or
- ii. 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.

A number of Acts relate to child protection in New South Wales:

- i. the Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community Services) Act 1998 which added Part 3A to the Ombudsman Act 1974 www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
- ii. the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 relating to working with children check clearances for all persons at the school engaged in child-related work www.kids.nsw.gov.au

- iii. the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 which sets out the responsibilities of Community Services regarding child protection
www.community.nsw.gov.au

The Principal maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registration and Accreditation of Individual Non-government Schools NSW manual.

4. Objectives

Penrith Christian School seeks to provide quality education. As such, regular attendance and punctuality are valued. This policy aims to assist all:

4.1. Students

- i. to attend school on a regular basis
- ii. to arrive and leave on time
- iii. to follow late sign in and early sign out procedures

4.2. Staff

- i. in maintaining strong pastoral care of students through encouraging regular school attendance
- ii. in roll marking procedures
- iii. in monitoring absenteeism

4.3. Parent/Carer

- i. in understanding their legal responsibilities regarding their child's attendance at school.