



## Student Attendance and Participation Policy

### Preface:

O'Loughlin Catholic College (OCC) is a school environment where students feel supported, happy and safe; encourages an increased level of accountability, responsibility and decision-making within the students; as each student is created in the likeness and image of God.

In meeting the requirements and obligation of the Northern Territory of Australian Education ACT 2015. OCC is committed to ensuring best practice approach to support students and families achieve the OCC student attendance benchmark of **95% attendance and 0% unexplained absences**.

As research conducted by Dr Stephen Zubrick highlights, every day attendance in school contributes towards a child's learning, and that academic outcomes are enhanced by maximising attendance in the School (Zubrick, 2013, p34).

OCC has a responsibility to record student attendance and respond to instances of irregular attendance. Staff use CES and SEQTA systems to record student attendance and absences. It is important for the College to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate intervention and strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented in partnership with the student and parents/guardians.

### 1.0 Guiding Principles:

- 1.1 Each student is created in the likeness and image of God
- 1.2 Each student has inherent dignity
- 1.3 Each student is unique
- 1.4 Every student's culture is respected and acknowledged
- 1.5 Regular attendance at school increases the opportunity for students to participate in the life of the community and to optimise students' learning
- 1.6 Parents play a fundamental role in their child's participation and attendance
- 1.7 All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent, such as illness
- 1.8 Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary, and to notify the school, by means of a phone call or letter, of the absence.
- 1.9 OCC continues to review and use practices that enhance and support students' attendance and participation.

## **2.0 Policy**

- 2.1** Students who are enrolled at OCC are required to attend and actively engage in the life of the College unless reasonable and valid grounds exists for them to be absent
- 2.2** The College will support students in partnership with parents/guardians where student attendance is not meeting the expectations of the College
- 2.3** The College, in line with legislative requirements and CENT polices, will collect and maintain accurate attendance records

## **3.0 Procedural Implications**

### **3.1 College Executive are to:**

- 3.1.1** Implement Catholic Education Northern Territory (CENT) and Diocesan of Darwin policies that are aligned to students' attendance and participation
- 3.1.2** Guide the implementation of a whole school approach for student attendance to be at 95%
- 3.1.3** Monitor non-attendance and re-engage students in partnership with parents/guardians
- 3.1.4** Ensure compliance of data entry in alignment with Northern Territory Department of Education (DoE) and CENT requirements
- 3.1.5** Ensure staff are made aware of the OCC student attendance policy and attendance procedures
- 3.1.6** To intervene in partnership with the parent/guardian when a student has not been able to meet the requirements of their attendance plan.  
Intervention measures may include but are not limited to:
  - The use of Senior Attendance and Truancy Officers
  - Flexible educational arrangements
- 3.1.7** Record and report attendance data in annual reviews
- 3.1.8** Ensure CES and SEQTA attendance training is part of the induction process for new staff (including reliefs) and annual training for existing staff
- 3.1.9** Respond promptly to any breach of this policy
- 3.1.10** Observe all legislative requirements and engage as necessary with external agencies in regard to student attendance and participation.

### **3.2 Staff are to:**

- 3.2.1** Homeroom teachers to ensure attendance data is entered into CES and SEQTA in accurate and timely manner (before 8:40 am)
- 3.2.2** Teacher to ensure lesson attendance data is entered into SEQTA in an accurate and timely manner (start of each lesson)
- 3.2.3** Homeroom teacher to contact parent/guardian of any student that has 3+ days of absences (on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the absence), to check in on how they are and offer any College support. This includes sanctioned and unexplained absences
- 3.2.4** Homeroom teachers to contact parent/guardian of any student that has been late to school 2 times without an explanation (unexplained), to check to see if there any issues/concerns, to explain what will occur (Restorative Service detention) if there is another unexplained absence for the term
- 3.2.5** To monitor student attendance and notify the Year Level Coordinator of any concerns
- 3.2.6** To model and promote the Gospel values and behaviours in their dealings with students and families
- 3.2.7** Create and maintain a welcoming, safe and positive learning environment that promotes student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships
- 3.2.8** Follow CENT and OCC policies and procedures.

### **3.3 Pastoral Care Team (SWAM) are to:**

- 3.3.1** Support College Executive and provide leadership to staff in the application of Student Attendance and Participation Policy
- 3.3.2** To investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate support strategies can be implemented
- 3.3.3** To arrange an engagement meeting with the student and their parent/guardian when attendance is below 90% or 3 unexplained absences, or has been late 5 times in Term, with the purpose to create a student attendance plan (after the first 5 weeks of School)
- 3.3.4** To escalate to the relevant Head of School, any student that has not seen improvement in attendance after 2 weeks from the start of their attendance plan

- 3.3.5** To inform parent/guardians via a letter (sent via SEQTA) each term any students whose attendance is below 95% and to offer the opportunity to speak to the relevant Year Level Coordinator to discuss strategies to support students achieve the College benchmark of a 95% attendance rate
- 3.3.6** Year Level Coordinators to follow up on any student that has been late to school 3 times in a term.
- 3.3.7** Pass on any communication from parents/guardians in relation to student planned absences to Student Service Officer (SSO) who will enter the information into CES and SEQTA.

#### **3.4 Students are to:**

- 3.4.1** Follow OCC and CENT policies and procedures
- 3.4.2** To attend school for the whole school day, every day and be on time for all timetabled classes
- 3.4.3** Not to leave school during school hours without parent permission (note, email or phone call)
- 3.4.4** To report to Front Office if arriving to school later than 8:35am.
- 3.4.5** To ensure work missed during any periods or days absent from school is completed (check with subject teacher and check on SEQTA Learn)
- 3.4.6** To ensure days absent are explained/notified by Parent/Guardians
- 3.4.7** To work with the College and Parents/Guardians in achieving an attendance rate of 95% or higher
- 3.4.8** To discuss strategies to deal with absenteeism with their Homeroom Teacher or Year Level Coordinator if attending school is difficult.

#### **3.5 Parents and Guardians are to:**

- 3.5.1** To ensure their child is enrolled and attends school. This is a legal obligation, as set out in the Northern Territory of Australian Education ACT 2015.
- 3.5.2** To ensure their child attends school for the whole day on every scheduled school day unless:
  - Child is too sick to leave the home or has an infectious disease or an injury preventing movement around the school

- A medical or dental appointment that could not occur out of school hours
- The College is provided with another genuine and acceptable reason preventing child's attendance

**3.5.3** To provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences on or before the morning of the day of absence.

**3.5.4** To provide a medical certificate for their child for absence that exceeds three days unless prior approval has been given by the College Principal

**3.5.5** To ensure that their child attends compulsory school events including:

- College Masses
- Sporting carnivals
- Camps
- Retreats
- O'Loughlin Day

**3.5.6** To respond to any text message, email, SEQTA messages or letter received regarding their child's absence from the College

**3.5.7** To apply to the College Principal for any planned absences (more than 3 days) via the College website under Sub section: Contact – Planned Absence Request.

**3.5.8** To contact their child's Year Level Coordinator or Head of School if their child is reluctant or refusing to attend the College

**3.5.9** To attend meetings as requested by the College to support their child's attendance and participation

**3.5.10** To provide a dated and signed note, notify the College via email, or to phone Student Reception staff, explaining any reason for their child's late arrival to the College

**3.5.11** To provide a dated and signed note, notify the College via email, or to phone Student Reception if their Child is required to leave school early. (Please note that for student protection purposes, students in Year 7 – Year 10 require a Parent/Guardian or approved delegate to present at Student Reception if their child is to leave school early. Year 11 -12 only require written or verbal permission to depart.

**3.5.12** To ensure that emergency contact information for their child is up-to-date

**3.5.13** To actively support the College in achieving its goal of a student attendance rate of 95%.

### **3.6 Student Service Officer (SSO)**

- 3.6.1** To inform the parent/guardian of any student absence from the College without explanation (on the same day), via SMS
- 3.6.2** To enter notified absences into CES and SEQTA
- 3.6.3** To enter students who are late into CES and SEQTA
- 3.7.3** To support YLC and teachers with the overview of attendance.

### **3.7 Expectations**

- 3.7.1** Attendance will be marked for all students each morning during Homeroom by the Homeroom teachers
- 3.7.2** Attendance will be marked each lesson for all subject classes throughout the duration of the school day by subject teachers
- 3.7.3** SSO will check all Homeroom rolls are marked by 9:00am and send SMS to parents/guardians for any student marked as unexplained by 9:30am
- 3.7.4** SSO will inform the Homeroom teacher, Year Level Coordinator and Deputy Principal if the Homeroom roll is not marked on time or incorrectly marked
- 3.7.5** The Deputy Principal will check subject classes have been marked daily
- 3.7.6** The Deputy Principal will follow up with Subject teacher for a subject roll not marked
- 3.7.8** Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class or on their behalf by the SSO.

### **4.0 Explanatory Notes and Definitions**

- 4.1** **Unexplained Absence:** Occurs when the student is not present at school and the Parent/Guardian does not contact the College with an explanation.
- 4.2** **Late Arrival:** A student is considered to have arrived late to school if they have arrived to school after 8.40am
- 4.3** **Explained Absence:** An explained absence occurs when a student is not present at school and Parent/Guardian has provided an accepted reason for their absence to the College.

- 4.4 Early Departures:** A student is considered to be an early departure if they leave the College before 3.00 pm with permission from their Parent/Guardian

## **5.0 Supporting Documents**

### **5.1 Related Policies**

OCC Student management policy  
OCC Code of Conduct  
OCC Restorative practices framework

### **5.2 Supporting Documents**

### **5.3 Government mandatory Policies and procedures**

Northern Territory of Australian Education ACT 2015  
NTDoE Attendance and participation policy  
NTDoE Attendance – compliance guidelines  
NTDoE Attendance – exemptions from attendance and participation guidelines  
NTDoE Attendance – recording and reporting guidelines

### **5.4 Church Documents**

Shares of the Vision 2015 (CENT)

### **5.5 References**

Hancock, K. J., Shepherd, C. C. J., Lawrence, D., & Zubrick, S. R. (2013). Student attendance and educational outcomes: Every day counts. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

**Commencement Date:** 19/10/2021

**Endorsed By:** O'Loughlin College Executive  
**Approved By**



**Rhett Bowden**  
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**Zane Dolbel**  
Chair of the College Board

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