

# Emmaus Catholic College

**Kemps Creek**



## **Attendance Policy**

**2016**

**To be reviewed December 2016**

## **Rationale**

Attendance at school is a legislative requirement of the *Education Act 1990*. School attendance plays a critical role in enhancing the lives of the students at Emmaus Catholic College. Every day of attendance adds to a student's academic achievement and success at school. In NSW, school attendance is compulsory for children over the age of six years until the minimum leaving age of 17 years. Students must complete Year 10 and after Year 10, until they turn 17 years of age, students must be:

- in school or registered for home schooling, or
- in approved education or training
- in full-time, paid employment (average 25 hours per week) or in a combination of work, education and/or training.

This policy aims to identify the importance of attendance for all students and outline the process that will be followed at Emmaus Catholic College to maximise student attendance.

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Emmaus Catholic College:

- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Parents are responsible for:**

- enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered non-government school or registering them with the Board of Studies NSW for home schooling;
- ensuring that their children attend school regularly;
- explaining the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school;
- taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.

### **Responsibilities of school staff - School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:**

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of well-being and 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.

### **The Principal is responsible for ensuring that:**

- students are enrolled consistent with the Diocesan enrolment policy;
- attendance records are maintained in a Diocesan-approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students;
- staff record accurately the attendance of each student in each lesson when lessons are conducted in a number of locations;
- a system is established for signing out students who need to leave the school premises during school hours;

- all attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible to the Diocesan Director or authorised Diocesan officer and to the Board of Studies Inspector;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Diocesan Director or authorised Diocesan officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom school strategies have failed to restore regular attendance;
- relevant school policies and procedures address attendance issues including truancy. They should provide strategies for encouraging good attendance and establish structures and procedures that support teachers in addressing issues of student non-attendance;
- school staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised;
- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.

*(Extract from CEDP Attendance Procedures)*

### **New CEDP requirements for student absence from school:**

- 1-9 days absence: Parents notify the school principal by mail or email (in written form).
- 10-99 days absence: Parents must complete and submit the Application for Extended Leave form prior to commencing leave OR apply for extended leave in writing to the Principal directly. If approved, the Principal issues a Certificate of Extended Leave. If the Principal declines this application, a letter notifying parents that the application has been declined would be forthcoming from the school.

### **School Based Management Plans and Procedures**

*Regular attendance at school is encouraged through the use of the following:*

- Regular monitoring of attendance patterns
- Promotion of a culture 'that every day counts'
- College attendance awards
- Incentives (as determined by LOWs)
- Information to parents in newsletter, parent forum and information evenings about the importance of regular attendance at school
- Positive reinforcement of regular attendance
- Professional development of staff to ensure an awareness of the importance of attendance and the impact of absenteeism

## Student Absence – ECC Flowchart 2016

### Homeroom teacher

- Monitors daily absence patterns and consults Leader of Welfare (LOW) prior to calling home when a student is absent for three consecutive days. Any parental phone calls must be recorded on Sentral.
- Homeroom teacher informs the LOW if there is any information about the absence that needs to be passed on and this is documented.



### Attendance Officer

- Attendance Officer sends email home to notify parent/carer that student is absent.
- Attendance Officer sends a letter home every Friday to parents detailing the absences for the week before. Absence is considered unexplained until this documentation is returned (preferably within 7 days).



### LOW

- Will monitor student absence patterns (emerging, chronic and complex) using FACES data to identify students at risk.
- Attendance Officer will provide LOWs with a fortnightly print out of Attendance Summary Reports for their respective year group, or they can access themselves using FACES.
- LOW will use this data to identify any possible emerging concerns and consult with Director of Welfare (DOW) on a fortnightly basis.



### Student attendance is 90% or less

- LOW, in consultation with Attendance Officer, sends Parent Attendance Information Letter and/or contacts parents by phone. Parental phone contact must be documented on Sentral.
- If emerging absence improves, LOW is encouraged to reinforce positive improvement with a call home.



### Student's pattern of absence is cause for concern or attendance is 80% or less

- Director of Welfare (DOW) and Attendance Officer meet fortnightly to identify students whose attendance is 80% or less.
- DOW, in consultation with LOW, organises Attendance Planning Meeting to develop Student Attendance Plan - SAP (as per CEDP flow chart). Details of meeting outlined on Sentral.
- LOW monitors the student to ensure successful implementation of the SAP.



**Attendance does not improve above 80% over the next 10 weeks of school OR Parents do not respond within 2 school weeks.** As per CEDP flow chart (Referral to Wellbeing & Behaviour Team for assessment and case work)



### Student's attendance falls below 70%

- AP and Attendance Officer will meet fortnightly to identify students whose attendance is 70% or less.
- AP will liaise with relevant LOW and DOW to determine need for Compulsory Schooling Conference.
- As per CEDP flow chart – ROSH report every 10 weeks (minimum) until matter is resolved.



**Parents/students have not attended a CSC or have not complied with CSC undertakings and student has not met BOSTES course completion criteria**

- As per CEDP flow chart (Referral to DEC legal services or abandon the enrolment contract)

## CEDP Student Absenteeism Flowchart – Secondary

### Student Absenteeism Flowchart - Secondary

#### Monitor and respond to student absence

*Home Room Teacher or nominated administrator:*

- informs the Year Coordinator or nominated leader of emerging patterns of absence
- follows up unaccounted absences by the end of the school day or as soon as possible

*Year Coordinator and or nominated leader:*

- generate Student Attendance Summary Reports fortnightly
- analyse absences and decide whether it is an issue of emerging absenteeism

#### Process 1: Emerging absenteeism - attendance is 90% or less

*Year Coordinator and or nominated leader:*

- send **Letter 1** and / or contact parents by phone

#### Process 2: Chronic absenteeism - attendance is 80% or less

- Nominated leader consults with System Counsellor
- Nominated leader organises Attendance Planning Meeting (APM)
- Nominated leader conducts APM with parent and student to develop a **Student Attendance Plan**
- System Counsellor provides case work as required
- Nominated leader schedules an APM review in 5 school weeks to review progress
- Nominated leader monitor's student's progress

#### Process 3a: Attendance remains 80% or less over the next 10 school weeks. Parents agree to:

- referral to Wellbeing & Behaviour Team via the System Counsellor for assessment and casework
- nominated leader schedules APM at 5 school

#### Process 3b(i): Parent does not attend APM within 2 school weeks and attendance remains 80% or less

- send **Letter 2** Request to attend APM
- school continues to contact the parents by phone to set an APM date

#### Process 3b(ii): No response within 1 school week

- send **Letter 2a** by registered post

#### Process 4: Complex absenteeism - attendance is 70% or less

- Student's progress is monitored by the Principal or nominated leader
- Principal or System Counsellor makes ROSH report every 10 school weeks (minimum) until resolved
- Principal completes a **Student Services Request for Service K-12** for CEDP Attendance Conference
- if CEDP Attendance Conference proceeds, Principal sends **Letter 3** to parent / carers
- DSP approves CEDP Attendance Conference and sends **Letter 4** to parent / carers
- Principal or nominated leader attends CEDP Attendance Conference
- Principal or nominated leader monitor compulsory schooling undertakings

#### Process 5: Parents / student have not attended an Attendance Conference or have not complied with undertakings and student has not met BOSTES course completion criteria

- DSP in consultation with the Executive Director, Principal and Coordinator Attendance determine:
  - Option A - referral to DEC legal services for consideration of legal action. CEDP sends **Letter 5**
  - Option B - continued attendance monitoring
  - Option C - abandoning the enrolment contract between the school and parent / student