



# Attendance Policy

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## Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe St Benedict's Catholic Primary School's approach to the consistent management of student attendance to meet legislative requirements and sector standards.

## Responsibilities

### General Requirements

#### *Compulsory Schooling:*

The [Queensland Government states](#) that "each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

A child should be enrolled in and attend school in the year that they turn compulsory school age (six years and six months). Each parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase has the legal obligation to ensure that the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse."

#### The Compulsory Schooling Phase:

- Starts the year a child turns 6 or starts Prep.
- Ends when the child turns 16 or finishes Year 10, whichever occurs first.

During this phase, the family or carer has a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school every day.

#### The Compulsory Participation Phase:

- Starts the year the child stops being of compulsory school age (i.e. reaches the age of 16 or completes Year 10).
- Ends when the child:
  - gains a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV or
  - has participated in eligible options for two years after the completion of the Compulsory Schooling Phase or
  - turns 17 years of age.

During this phase, families and carers have a legal obligation to ensure their child meets the attendance requirements of the eligible option of their choice.

### Roll-marking:

Our school has a responsibility to record student attendance and respond to instances of irregular attendance. Staff use the eMinerva system to record student attendance and absences. It is important for our school to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented.

Our school, and by virtue of their employment, our teachers, are legally required to monitor and record attendance of students in their care on a daily basis, whether absent or present in class, on excursion or at a school-based activity.

### Student Attendance Level:

Students, families and carers, and staff will work together to ensure all students meet the school expectation of 90% or above attendance and zero unexplained absences.

90% attendance equates to 5 days absence per term and 10 days absence per semester.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinate and implement this procedure.</li><li>• Manage student attendance in consultation with the school community.</li><li>• Engage with families to proactively promote high levels of student attendance.</li><li>• Monitor non-attendance and re-engage students in partnership with families and carers.</li><li>• Coordinate the 'Process for School Attendance Monitoring &amp; Intervention' as outlined in the document below.</li><li>• Ensure compliance of data entry in alignment with eMinerva requirements.</li><li>• Ensure staff are made aware of the BCE Student Attendance policy and this procedure and ensure a copy of this procedure is provided to relief staff (i.e. published on School Portal).</li><li>• Record and report attendance data in annual reviews.</li><li>• Ensure eMinerva training is part of the induction process for new staff and annual training for existing staff.</li></ul>
School leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with Student Services School officer to monitor if rolls are frequently not marked.</li><li>• Work with teachers to monitor frequent unexplained absences.</li><li>• Advise teachers of any need to change an attendance category, e.g.: the use of 'Present – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension', etc.</li><li>• Amend marked rolls in consultation with administrators and teachers if necessary.</li><li>• Ensure relief staff are entered into WSS timesheets in order to gain access to eMinerva.</li></ul>
Student Services School Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check that rolls have been marked by 9am daily. Follow up with phone calls to teachers to mark rolls by this time.</li><li>• Notify School Leadership of frequently unmarked rolls or incorrectly marked rolls.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter student absence details into the eMinerva log for student absences where the family carer have informed the office.</li> <li>• Follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's family or carer via phone <b>by 11am daily</b>.</li> <li>• Vontact the family or carer of any student arriving late unaccompanied.</li> <li>• If a student is an early departure, contact the class and have the child sent to office.</li> <li>• Send out SMS alerts to family or carer <b>by 9.30am</b> each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences.</li> <li>• Provide a paper roll for relief teachers n occasions when a relief teacher does not have access to mark an electronic roll in eMinerva.</li> </ul>
Staff with roll-marking responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure data is entered into eMinerva in an accurate and timely manner, at least twice per day.</li> <li>• Any student absent from school without explanation requires same day follow up and reporting to families and carers on the day of the absence.</li> <li>• Follow up on eMinerva notifications of unexplained absences.</li> <li>• Inform School Leadership of unexplained or 3+ days of absence.</li> <li>• Monitor class rolls regularly and make contact with parents where absence of their child is insufficient or prolonged. When explanation is received, classroom teachers can update the roll.</li> <li>• Enact their responsibilities in the 'School Attendance Monitoring and Intervention' process and in the case of an 'Attendance Improvement Plan'.</li> </ul>

## Procedure

Activity	School Procedures
Attendance Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance will be marked for all students each morning and afternoon by the class teachers (or specialist teacher in the event that the first lesson of the day is with a specialist teacher).</li> <li>• The Student Services School Officer will check this has been done for classes <b>at 9am and 2pm daily</b>.</li> <li>• A phone call will be made to the teacher if the AM class roll is not marked on time.</li> <li>• An email will be sent to teachers as a reminder for PM class rolls not marked (weekly).</li> <li>• Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class.</li> <li>• School leadership will be advised if rolls are frequently not marked.</li> </ul>

Activity	School Procedures
Present Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in class will be marked 'Present – In Class'.</li> <li>- at representative sporting and Arts events will be marked 'Present – Sports/Arts'.</li> <li>- participating in other activities (excursion; camps etc.) will be marked accordingly by the teacher responsible for the activity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• These attendance categories must not be changed, unless the student is present in class and then the category should be changed to 'Present – In Class'.</li> <li>• Students will only be marked as 'Present – Not Required to Attend' upon instruction from School Leadership.</li> </ul>
Absent Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not in class, and notification has not been received from a family or carer, will be marked 'Absent – Unexplained'.</li> <li>- not in class, and notification has been received from a family or carer, will be marked 'Absent – Explained'.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When marking the roll, if teachers have received written information from the family or carer regarding a student's absence from school, the teacher will enter the details (including absence category) into a log in eMinerva.</li> <li>• If the family or carer have informed the office of the absence, the Student Services School Officer will enter these details into a log in eMinerva.</li> <li>• Class teachers should enter any information regarding future planned absences of students by entering a 'Notified Absence' into e-Minerva.</li> <li>• If a student is away for three consecutive days (or earlier if concerned) the class teacher will contact the family or carer.</li> <li>• Any student absent from school without explanation requires same day follow up and reporting to families and carers on the day of the absence.</li> <li>• If a student has been previously marked 'Present at school' but they are not in class without permission, the teacher is to ring the office and advise that the student is not present. Office personnel will then inform school leadership that the student is missing. They will then attempt to locate the student who will be dealt with according to the school's Student Behaviour Support Plan.</li> <li>• Students will only be marked as 'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension' upon instruction from school leadership.</li> </ul>
Unexplained Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the Family or Carer does not contact the school.</li> <li>• A notification will be sent to the student's family or carer <b>by approximately 9.30 am each day</b>. The Student Services School Officer will follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's family or carer via phone <b>by 11am daily</b>.</li> <li>• Past unexplained absences are indicated by the red Unexplained Absence Alert icon on class rolls. When the class teacher receives written explanation of the absence from the student's family or carer they will update the absence category and enter details into eMinerva.</li> <li>• Frequent unexplained absences should be brought to the attention of the School Leadership team.</li> </ul>

Activity	School Procedures
Late Arrivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student is considered to have arrived late <b>any time after 8.45am</b>.</li> <li>• All students arriving late will sign in at the office and will be given a late slip. This slip needs to be presented to the teacher when arriving in class. If they do not have a late slip, they are to be sent to the office to sign in.</li> <li>• If class teachers observe a student has made a habit of arriving late, or is late for three consecutive days, they will contact the student's family or carer as per this procedure.</li> <li>• The family or carer of students' from Years Prep - 3 should accompany their child to their class. This may include specialist lessons/library/ hall/assembly.</li> <li>• School Office staff will contact the family or carer of any student arriving late unaccompanied.</li> </ul>
Early Departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student is considered to be leaving early <b>any time before 2.30pm</b>. All students leaving early will provide notification from the family or carer to their class teacher.</li> <li>• As with Late Arrivals, all students leaving early must be signed out at the School Office by their family or carer.</li> <li>• The administration staff will contact the class and have the child sent to office.</li> <li>• Students are to be collected by their family or carer from the office.</li> </ul>
SMS Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained Absences: An SMS message will be sent to the student's family or carer by 9.30am each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences.</li> <li>• Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to School Leadership. Efforts should be made by the office staff and/or class teacher to follow up with an explanation to the student's family or carer.</li> </ul>
Non-Marking of Electronic Roll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all class rolls can be found in each class' 'Relief Teacher Folder' or will be provided by the office. Once the system is online the class teacher will mark the roll so that the records are correct. This may be done the next day if necessary. Only administrators can amend marked rolls in consultation with School Leadership.</li> <li>• In the event of an evacuation, hard copies of rolls will be taken to the evacuation area to be marked by class teachers. Class teachers will advise Evacuation Coordinator/Chief Warden/School leadership of any unexplained absentees.</li> <li>• During a lockdown the roll will not be marked.</li> </ul>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An activity can be entered into eMinerva for students attending excursions, camps and other school-based activities.</li> <li>• A yellow alert will appear next to the student's name on class rolls to indicate the student has a timetable clash. The activity will be marked by the staff member responsible for the event, e.g. 'Present – Work Study'; 'Present – Excursion'. This attendance category will inherit through the rest of the student's timetable for the day.</li> <li>• These attendance categories must not be changed, unless the student is present at school and then the category should be changed to 'Present – In Class'.</li> </ul>
Relief and supervising staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relief staff will have access to the school portal and eMinerva using their own BCE username and password and are to mark attendance in eMinerva if they are supervising at the roll-marking times 9am and before 2:30pm.</li> <li>• In the event that a relief teacher does not have access to mark an electronic roll in eMinerva, a paper roll will be provided by the school office.</li> </ul>

Activity	School Procedures
Part-time Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part time students will sign in and out of the school office on arrival or departure as per arrangements made.</li> </ul>
Mobile Attendance Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching staff wishing to use this application can access it by using the URL <a href="https://staffportal.bne.catholic.edu.au/mawa">https://staffportal.bne.catholic.edu.au/mawa</a> and entering their BCE Username and Password. The <a href="#">User Guide – Mobile Attendance Application</a> should be read prior to use.</li> </ul>

## Performance

### Review of Processes and Procedures

The school will perform a high-level check of this procedure annually and a detailed review at least every two years.

### Process for School Attendance Monitoring & Intervention

Research has proven that there is a high correlation between school attendance and academic performance and success, along with social and emotional well-being while absence from school is often the greatest single cause of poor performance and achievement.

Regular attendance helps students:

- Develop the skills needed to access the world of work and other opportunities.
- Learn the importance of punctuality and routine.
- Make and keep friendships.

As members of St Benedict’s staff, we passionately believe in delivering a schooling experience that offers a holistic education of each child so they can achieve their potential and make a difference in the community. We place a strong emphasis on Student Attendance. The following process is two-fold:

1. It supports our intention to carefully monitor the attendance of all students.
2. It provides opportunities to work collaboratively to develop strategies and interventions which seek to improve poor attendance of students who fall below acceptable levels of risk.

### Levels of Risk for Student Attendance

Regular Attendance	Student attendance falls between 94% and 100%	No more than 12 days absent for the year (3 per term)
Indicated Risk	Student attendance falls between 85% and 93%	No more than 30 days absent for the year (7.5 per term)
Moderate Risk	Student attendance falls between 75% and 84%	No more than 50 days absent per year (12.5 days per term)
Severe Risk	Student attendance falls below 75%	

### Process for Monitoring Student Attendance

1. If a student is away for three consecutive days (or earlier if concerned) the class teacher will contact the family or carer.

2. Classroom Teachers to monitor class rolls regularly and make contact with parents where absence of their child has been marked unexplained and no explanation has been received within the week of that absence. When explanation is received, classroom teachers can update the roll.
3. Leadership Team, with the support of the Guidance Counsellor, review student attendance twice per term.
  - a) Identify students whose absenteeism data require following up by the classroom teacher. Classroom teacher make contact with parent informally to highlight concern about growing number of days absent. Liaise with member of Leadership Team as necessary. All attempts to make contact (successful and unsuccessful should be documented)
  - b) Identify students whose absenteeism data require immediate attention by the Leadership Team: Prep – Year 2 Principal. Year 3 and 4 APRE. Year 5 and 6 APA.
4. For regular of persistent and unexplained absences or absences where the reason is considered unsatisfactory, a member of the Leadership Team will co-ordinate a meeting with parents and members of the student support team (Classroom Teacher, STIE, Guidance Counsellor)
5. An Attendance Improvement Plan will be created to include specific short-term attendance targets and a variety of strategies to support a successful outcome. (It is recommended that the Attendance Improvement Plan will run for three weeks at a time.
6. Leadership Team to monitor daily attendance of student with an Attendance Improvement Plan.
  - a) Provide affirming feedback if necessary to the student and parent.
  - b) Make contact with the parent if the student is not present throughout three-week period.
7. If attendance is still not satisfactory upon review, Principal co-ordinates another meeting with Student Support Team.
8. Please note: consideration of whether an adjustment to the student’s educational program or a flexible arrangement is appropriate. If reasonable cause to suspect non-attendance is associated with risk of harm to the child, the Principal will contact Department of Communities (Child Safety Services).
9. Following further review and if there is no improvement to the attendance of the student, the Principal sends written notice under s178(2) and takes reasonable steps to meet with the parent outside the Student Support Team. Advice is provided that if attendance does not begin to improve, the Principal refers to Brisbane Catholic Education Employee Relations for referral to the Director of Non-State Schooling .

It should be noted that where the attendance improves for a student, it should be celebrated and affirmed.

## References and Definitions

### References

- [Attendance – Description of Attendance Categories](#)
- [Attendance – Recording Attendance](#)
- [Attendance – How to Bulk Late Arrival or Early Departure](#)

- [Attendance – Teachers Recording Attendance](#)
- [Attendance – Accessing Another Teacher’s Roll](#)
- [Attendance – How to Manage Unexplained Absences](#)
- [Security – Relief Staff](#)
- [Attendance - How to Mark Attendance \(Teaching and Administration Staff\)](#)

### **Definition**

*Unexplained Absence:* An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the family or carer does not contact the school.