



Student Attendance Policy and Procedure



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Siena
CATHOLIC COLLEGE

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe Siena Catholic College's approach to the consistent roll marking and management of student attendance to meet legislative requirements and standards.

Policy Statement

Siena Catholic College recognises that every day of attendance in school contributes toward a student's learning and that maximising attendance enhances academic, employment and social outcomes.

- Attending school is a right of the child and fundamental to attainment in learning.
- Improving student attendance involves employees, students, parents, and legal guardians understanding their respective responsibilities.
- BCE is committed to student attendance being a priority in schools through consistent practices of roll-marking, monitoring, and proactive follow-up of student non-attendance.
- Schools will communicate high expectations of attendance to employees, students, parents, and legal guardians, and celebrate high and improved attendance.
- Student attendance is achieved by schools by:
 - Promoting attendance as the responsibility of employees, students, parents, and legal guardians
 - Engaging with the school community on the importance of attendance
 - Celebrating and acknowledging high attendance i.e., above 95%
 - Supporting and reengaging students with attendance below 90% and celebrating and acknowledging improvement in attendance
 - Tracking, and responding to, absences as soon as practical on the day of absence according to the BCE Procedure: Student Attendance – Responding to Student Attendance Concerns and our Student Attendance Roll Marking procedure outlined in this document
 - Recording all student absences in eMinerva as per our Student Attendance Roll Marking procedure outlined in this document
 - Regularly tracking and monitoring student attendance data, following up on all unexplained absences and patterns of non-attendance as per the BCE Procedure: Student Attendance – Responding to Student Attendance Concerns
 - Managing unsanctioned non-attendance under our Student Behaviour Support Framework Policy and Guidelines.

Definitions

Unexplained Absence – An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the parent/legal guardian does not contact the school.

eMinerva – School and Student Administration System used by all BCE schools. eMinerva is the central point of truth for student data in all BCE systems.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ coordinate and implement this procedure■ manage student attendance in consultation with the school community■ engage with families to proactively promote high levels of student attendance■ engage with families to build an understanding of the importance of informing the school on student absences as soon as possible to ensure student safety■ monitor attendance weekly using the Business Intelligence tool

Role	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ monitor non-attendance and re-engage students in partnership with parents/legal guardians ▪ ensure compliance of data entry in alignment with eMinerva (BCE's IT system) requirements ▪ ensure staff are made aware of the BCE Student Attendance policy, the Responding to Student Attendance Concerns procedure and this procedure and ensure a copy of this procedure ▪ ensure a copy of this procedure is provided to relief staff (i.e. published on School Portal) ▪ record and report attendance data in annual reviews ▪ ensure relief staff are entered into WSS timesheets in order to gain access to the eMinerva exception list ▪ ensure eMinerva training is part of the induction process for new staff ▪ ensure staff complete eMinerva training annually
Teachers (or delegate) with roll-marking responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure rolls are marked and data is entered into eMinerva in an accurate and timely manner, at least twice per day, specifically at the beginning of the day and after second break ▪ follow up on eMinerva notifications of unexplained absences ▪ inform Principal or delegate of any unexplained absence ▪ inform Principal of more than three consecutive days of absence with an explanation or if a pattern of explained non-attendance becomes evident
Administration staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ inform Principal or delegate of morning and afternoon unmarked rolls on the same day as roll marking ▪ inform Principal or delegate of any student absent from school without explanation and ensure same day follow up and reporting to parent/legal guardians on the day of the absence using ParentSMS in a timely manner to allow for a response ▪ where there is no response to the ParentSMS notification of unexplained absence by midday, make at least one phone call to an alternative emergency contact, prior to the end of the school day. ▪ continue to follow up each day until the absence is explained and refer to Principal or delegate

Requirements

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).”

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 legal guardian 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, legal guardians 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. Where a pattern of irregular attendance is identified, schools follow the BCE Procedure: Student Attendance - Responding to Student Attendance Concerns.

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 Levels

Students, parents/legal guardians, 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.

Early Departures

At Siena, we are clear that the optimal position is for every student to be in their allotted class from the beginning of the day until the end of the school day.

Occasionally, events and appointments can occur which are very difficult to manage outside of school hours. Obviously, the less that this occurs, the less disruption there is to an individual's learning journey, as well as to the whole class the student is leaving from.

Considerations

There are three main considerations when establishing a policy on early departure.

- **Safety:** Our duty of care for each student is one that we take very seriously, and we endeavour to minimise the potential for harm befalling any of our students during the school day. While we acknowledge the possible inconvenience for parents/caregivers to attend school, we will not compromise the safety of the students for any reason. A phone call saying that a student can walk, ride or drive off the school site compromises this safety and as such does not meet our requirements.
- **Legal Obligation:** In loco parentis refers to the legal responsibility of an organisation such as Siena to assume the responsibilities of a parent while the student is in our care. Like all schools, we have had situations regarding forged notes and phone calls from 'false' people pertaining to be parents seeking to give permission to leave school early which once again compromises the student's safety and as such does not meet our requirements.
- **Student Learning:** A situation had developed where a growing number of students, particularly senior students, were ringing their parents asking them to call the office and give permission for them to go home if they felt the lessons/programs they were involved in didn't suit them for that afternoon! Students are

not always best placed to make this judgement and as such sometimes need some encouragement to stick it out.

Procedures

Activity	Requirement
Attendance Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance will be marked for all students each morning and afternoon (after second break) by House Group teachers/class teachers. ▪ Attendance will be marked each lesson for all classes throughout the duration of the school day by class teachers. ▪ The Student Services Administration Officer will check that the morning roll marking has been done for House Group classes by 9.15am. ▪ A phone call will be made to the House Group teacher by the Student Services Administration Officer if the House Group roll is not marked on time. ▪ The Student Services Administration Officer will check subject classes at 11.30am and 2.15pm daily. ▪ Student Services Administration Officer will advise the Deputy Principal or delegate of unmarked and incorrectly marked rolls. ▪ Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class or Student Services Administration Officer.
Present Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in class will be marked ‘Present – In Class’ • attending TAFE or work experience will be marked as ‘Present – Work/Study’ by the VET coordinator or alternatively marked by Student Services staff • in an alternate learning activity will be marked ‘Present – Alternate Learning Activity’ • with Guidance Counsellors will be marked as ‘Present – In-School Appointment’ by the Guidance Counsellor. • in sick bay will have their attendance category changed to ‘Present – In Sick Bay’ by the Student Services Administration Officer • participating in activities (excursion, camps, etc.) will be marked accordingly by the teacher responsible or alternatively marked by Student Services Administration Officer ▪ 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’. ▪ Students will only be marked as ‘Present – Not Required to Attend’ upon instruction from College Leadership.
Absent Categories in eMinerva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not in class, and notification has not been received from a parent/legal guardian, will be marked ‘Absent – Unexplained’ • not in class, and notification has been received from a parent/legal guardian, will be marked ‘Absent – Explained’ ▪ When marking the roll, if teachers have received written information from the parent/legal guardian regarding a student’s absence from school, the teacher will enter the details (including absence category) into a log in eMinerva. ▪ If the parent/legal guardian has informed Student Services of the absence, the Student Services Administration Officer will enter these details into a log in eMinerva.

Activity	Requirement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Services Administration Officer should enter any information regarding future planned absences of students by entering a Notified Absence into e-Minerva. ▪ If a student is away for more than three consecutive days of explained absence (or earlier if concerned) the Year Level Pastoral Leader or delegated staff member will contact the parent/legal guardian for a pastoral conversation ▪ Any student absent from school without explanation requires same day reporting to parents/legal guardians on the day of the absence. ▪ If a student has been previously marked 'Present at school' but they are absent from class without permission, the teacher is to ring Student Services and advise that the student is not present. The Student Services Administration Officer will then inform available staff members (preferably Year Level Pastoral Leader) 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. ▪ Students will only be marked as 'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension' upon instruction from College Leadership.
Unexplained Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A notification will be sent to the student's parent/legal guardian on the same day once an unexplained absence has been identified. The teacher or delegated staff member will follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's parent/legal guardian via ParentSMS in a timely manner to allow the follow up of non-response on the same day of absence. ▪ If confirmation of the notification of an unexplained absence by the parent/legal guardian has not been received by midday, at least one follow up phone call must be made to an alternative emergency contact listed on eMinerva prior to the end of the school day. ▪ If there is no response from the parent/legal guardian or emergency contact, schools must continue to follow up with the parent/legal guardian each day until the unexplained absence is explained even if the student has returned to school. ▪ If a child protection order is in place, then the Child Safety Officer should be notified as well as the legal guardian. ▪ Past unexplained absences are indicated by the red Unexplained Absence Alert icon on class rolls. When the House Group teacher receives written explanation of the absence from the student's legal guardian, they will update the absence category and enter details into eMinerva.
Late Arrivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A student is considered to have arrived late any time after the 8.45am bell. ▪ Parent/legal guardians will be notified of any unexplained late arrival. ▪ All students arriving late will sign in at the Student Services 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 Student Services to sign in. ▪ An SMS message will be sent to the student's parent/legal guardian advising their child has arrived late to school if not accompanied by their parent/legal guardian. ▪ If House Group teachers observe a student has made a habit of arriving late, or is late for three consecutive days, they will contact the student's Year Level Pastoral Leader who will contact the parent/legal guardian as per this procedure.

Activity	Requirement
Early Departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A student is considered to be leaving early any time before 3.10pm. ▪ If a situation arises where a student needs to leave school during the day, then a parent is required to attend the school, sign them out and accompany them off site. If circumstances make this impossible, we have the added provisions to support parents/carers. ▪ A proxy adult who is listed on the emergency contact list for that student may come and collect the student from Student Services. ▪ If an appointment is known in advance, a parent may come into Student Services in the days prior to this appointment and sign them out in advance. ▪ In emergency situations, arrangements may be able to be made to transport a student where they need to go to. ▪ These measures aim to ensure both the safety of the students and the smooth running of the school day. Any feedback or queries are welcome via emailing the school.
SMS Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained Absences: An SMS message will be sent to the student's parent/legal guardian on the same day once an unexplained absence has been identified. Such communication will be in a timely manner to allow the follow up of non-response on the same day of absence if there is no response to the initial text message. ▪ If there is no response from the SMS message at least one phone call to an alternative emergency contact number in the eMinerva contact list must be made prior to the end of the school day. ▪ Unexplained Late Arrivals: An SMS message will be sent to a student's parent/legal guardian advising of students who have arrived late. ▪ Early Departures: An SMS message will be sent to a student's parent/legal guardian advising of students who have left early unaccompanied by their parent/legal guardian. ▪ Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to the Principal or delegate. The teacher will follow up by telephoning the student's parent/legal guardian.
Non-Marking of Electronic Rolls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all House Group rolls will be provided by the Student Services Administration Officer. Subject rolls will not need to be marked. Once the system is online the House Group teacher or Student Services Administration Officer will mark the roll in eMinerva so that the records are correct. This may be done the next day if necessary. Only administrators can amend marked rolls in consultation with the Principal or delegate. ▪ In the event of an evacuation, hard copies of rolls will be taken to the evacuation area to be marked by House Group teachers. House Group teachers will advise the Year Level Pastoral Leader of any unexplained absentees. ▪ During a lockdown, the roll will not be marked.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An activity will be entered into eMinerva for students attending excursions, camps, and other school-based activities. ▪ 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'. Alternatively marked by Student Services Administration Officer following consultation with the teacher responsible for the activity. This

Activity	Requirement
	<p>attendance category will inherit through the rest of the student's timetable for the day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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'.
Relief and Supervising Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 for each class they are supervising in accordance with this procedure. Teaching staff conducting supervision will mark attendance in eMinerva for the class they are supervising.
Part-time Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time students will sign in and out of the school office on arrival or departure as per arrangements made.
Mobile Attendance Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching staff wishing to use this application can access it via their school portal and entering their BCE username and password. The User Guide – Mobile Attendance Application should be read prior to use.
Exam Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students on exam block will sign in and out via the designated exam rooms blocks via QR code under supervision of the assigned exam block teacher.

Associated Documents

- ACARA national standards for student attendance data reporting
- Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane Code of Conduct
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- Student Attendance – Reporting Criteria
- Student Behaviour Support Policy and Procedure
- Student Protection Policy
- BCE Procedure: Student Attendance Roll Marking (Secondary/P-12)
- BCE Student Attendance Policy
- BCE Procedure: Student Attendance Responding to Student Attendance Concerns
- Attendance - Description of Attendance Categories
- Attendance – How to Bulk Late Arrival or Early Departure
- Attendance – Accessing Another Teacher's Roll
- Attendance – How to Manage Unexplained Absences
- Attendance - How to Mark Attendance (Teaching and Administration Staff)
- Security – Relief Staff