



Northside

Christian College

Attendance and Roll Marking Policy

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Scope

These procedures are in place for all students at Northside Christian College.

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an effective full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Northside Christian College takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of its students. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes a student's ability to develop friendship groups within the College.

Rationale

Statutory expectations require all schools to record student attendance twice per day in Primary schools and in every class in Secondary schools.

There may be various reasons for poor attendance – including student health and wellbeing, family disruption, extended family holidays, school refusal, or poor motivation on behalf of the student. Most concerns about the rate of attendance will require a pastoral focus.

Generally speaking, school attendance is compulsory in Victoria. However, there are specific attendance expectations for VCE students, which need to be monitored and managed carefully.

Attendance Regulations

Children of compulsory school age (six years and up to the age of seventeen years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition or correspondence education through the Distance Education Centre. In exceptional circumstances, an exemption from school attendance may be granted.

Specific Attendance Requirements

VCE Students.

The VCE Guidelines (published by VCAA) expressly invite schools to set their own attendance requirements for the VCE.

Section 10.1 VCE Attendance: 'All VCE units require 50 hours of class time. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work but there has been a substantial breach of attendance rules and the school therefore wishes to assign an N to the unit, the school must assign an N for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.'

At Northside Christian College we communicate the following expectations in our 'VCE Student Policy Handbook' (a document which is given to all VCE students):

'(Section) 4.2. VCE Attendance Policy ... Students are expected to attend all time-tabled classes, excursions, College and Year Level Assemblies, including Chapel services, and be punctual at all times. The College policy is a minimum required class attendance of 90% (unless acceptable explanations are provided) for each unit of study during a semester. All subject teachers will mark a class roll during each lesson.'

VCE Staff and Students should be familiar with Section 4.2 of the VCE Student Policy Handbook.

VCE Staff are required to keep a roll for every VCE class. (See VCE Staff Policy Handbook)

Implementation

- The rolls are marked digitally: Primary during Home Group in the morning and straight after lunch by the Class Teacher, Secondary in Home Group and at the commencement of each period throughout the day. The rolls are marked on a digital device (web enabled) using the College Administration software (Seqta);
- Reasons for absences must be in writing to attendance@ncc.vic.edu.au or a handwritten note;
- Parents are required to notify the College before 9:30am;
- Students that are late to school are required to sign in at the College Office;
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of co-operation regarding student attendance will result in a meeting being organised with the Director of Learning;
- Parents are expected to contact the College in writing if their child is absent and are required to give a reason for the absence. This information is entered into the College Administration software (Seqta) by the College Administration Staff;
- If a student is absent for 3 days in a row, their parents will be contacted by phone by the Home Group or Class Teacher to ascertain when the student will return to the College and to offer pastoral care;
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services;
- Students leaving the College early should report to the College Office. Primary and Secondary school students should be signed out by a Parent / Guardian;
- Parents / Guardians are required to give prior notice in writing regarding early departures, where possible. All students are required to be collected from the Office by a Parent / Guardian;
- Students are requested not to communicate with their Parents/Guardians except via the College Office. Mobile phones are not to be used to contact Parents/Guardians directly, either by SMS, social media or phone call.

Acceptable reasons for student absences:

- Sickness;
- Danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease;
- Temporary or permanent infirmity;
- Unavoidable and sufficient cause, e.g. bereavement within the family or of a close friend, or family trauma;
- Attending a specialist appointment, VET Course, approved Private Study at home.
- Attending a College organised activity which is considered an approved absence, e.g. excursion, camp, work experience or Cultural event.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absences:

- Truancy;
- Shopping expeditions with or without caregiver;
- Haircuts;
- Helping at home or at Parent / Guardian's place of work;
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to and from such work);
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours (including driving lessons /

tests;

- Excessive time for appointments which are avoidable;
- Finishing homework;
- Late nights;
- Birthdays;
- Holidays.

Parent / Guardian's Responsibilities Regarding Student Absences

It is the Parent / Guardian's responsibility to ensure that their children are enrolled in and attend a school every day, unless there are acceptable reasons for absence. Parents / Guardians are asked to notify the College in writing of any absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence.

Short-term absences - 1 or 2 days

Parents / Guardians are asked to provide a written note (email is acceptable), detailing the reason for absence, by the day of return to the College. Parents / Guardians may notify the College in advance of the absence and the reason for the absence if this is possible.

Long-term absences - 3 or more days

Parents / Guardians are asked to contact the College before the absence, if possible, or on the third day at the latest to explain the absence. In addition, a written note, stating the reason for the absence needs to be provided on the day of return to the College. If the reason is sickness, caregivers are expected to provide a Doctor's Certificate (for 3 days or more).

VCE students are advised to seek a Doctor's Certificate for any absence from the College. Please refer to the VCE Student Policy Handbook for additional information.

Very long-term absences

Parents / Guardians are asked to discuss with the Principal the implications of long-term absences from the College, before firm plans are made. When students are unavoidably absent for a long period of time, where possible the College will provide details of work for students to go on with, if requested to do so.

Please note that the College and Parents / Guardians need to be familiar with the attendance requirements as detailed in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Late Pass Procedure

1. All students arriving after 8:50am must go to Reception in the College Office to have their attendance recorded. A Receptionist will issue a Late Pass for Primary school students while Secondary School students will sign-in on the computer;
2. Class Teachers should not admit students late to class, without enquiring as to the reason for lateness. If a Primary student has just arrived at the College, the Late Pass should be sighted by the Teacher as evidence that a Primary school student has signed in. Secondary school student attendance can be verified on the College Administration software (Seqta);
3. Persistently late students will be referred to the Director of Learning / Head of School and have such other consequences applied as are deemed appropriate by the Principal.

Examples of acceptable reasons for lateness:

- Accident on way to the College;
- Transport breakdown on way to the College;
- Transport or College bus late;
- Other unavoidable and sufficient reasons.

Parents / Guardians are asked to provide a written note. If no note is written on the day of lateness, then a note must be shown to the Home Group Teacher on the next day.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for lateness:

- Truancy;
- Sleeping in;
- Just late (no reason given);
- Haircut;
- Shopping;
- Appointments which could have been made out of school hours (including driving lesson / test);
- Other avoidable and insufficient reasons.

College Action for Unacceptable Reasons

- Referral to the Director of Learning / Head of School;
- Restorative Interview with the Director of Learning / Head of School for second and third offences;
- Referral to Deputy Principal or Principal for subsequent offence for more serious consequences.

NOTE: Lateness on compassionate grounds, e.g. family trauma, will be followed up by the Welfare Team for the sake of the welfare of students. In these cases, additional consequences will not be given.

Early Departure

VCE students are permitted to leave the College grounds to go to Bundoora Square during lunchtime if their Parents / Guardians give written permission at the beginning of the College year. These students must attend Reception in the College Office to sign out before leaving. They must sign back in at the College Office before the end of lunch when they return.

If students need to leave the College early or leave in the middle of the school day, e.g. to attend a medical appointment or for family reasons, they must attend the College Office before leaving to sign out and provide a written note. All students must have their Guardian with them when they do this. The student's Guardian must come to the Office to collect the student and sign them out. If students return before the end of the school day they must sign back in at the College Office before attending class.

Camps and Excursions

In the case of an excursion which requires students to meet offsite without attending the College first, the Teacher in Charge provides the College Office Administration Staff with a list of students expected to attend the excursion the day before the excursion occurs. The Teacher in Charge then takes the roll on the day of the excursion and either emails or calls the College Office to confirm or make any alterations to the list of proposed attendees. This

information is then entered manually onto the College Administration software (Seqta) by Administration Staff. When this is not possible, the Teacher in Charge will do this remotely.

To meet Duty of Care responsibilities, the college attendance records should indicate whether the student was physically present in a classroom, or absent. If the student is attending a College-approved activity, this will be indicated with an event, excusing the student from class. In the latter situation, the Teacher in Charge of the activity should record attendance and ensure Parents/Guardians are notified of any absences in the same manner as for regular absences from school.

CRTs

Casual Relief Teachers (CRT) are met by the CRT Co-ordinator in the morning before the College day starts and are shown how to mark the roll. If the CRT has a digital device, they are given a password so that they can mark the roll electronically. If they do not have a digital device, they are given a hard copy of the roll for their class and asked to mark it at the usual times, returning it to the College Office Administration Staff at the beginning of periods 1 and 6 so that the information can be entered manually into the College Administration software (Seqta).

Paper Rolls

In the case where electronic roll marking is not possible, up to date paper copies of the roll will be available from the College Office. These should be marked at the same time and by the same Staff as electronic rolls and returned to the College Office.

Marking Rolls Procedures

It is important to realise that rolls are a legal document. They can be used in evidence in a court of law and if incorrectly filled in can bring evidence into question. They are a legal record of a student's attendance at school for the compulsory years of schooling. They also provide important information concerning VCE students. Rolls show the attendance of students in a school and are used for determination funding of per capita grants. For all these reasons they need to be marked accurately.

1. Attendance Rolls must be marked twice daily for Primary school classes and at the commencement of each period, including morning Home Group, for Secondary school classes;
2. Students not present at the commencement of Home Group should be marked as absent. The Administration Staff will update this entry if a student arrives late;
3. Insist that all absences are followed up with a note in writing from the Parent / Guardian. This information must be communicated to the Office Administration Staff so the attendance can be recorded accurately into the College attendance system;
4. Long term and/or habitual absences as well as welfare concerns regarding absences should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Director of Learning / Head of School. This is also particularly important for VCE regulations;
5. **STUDENTS SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO MARK A ROLL;**
6. All Prep to Year 12 rolls should be completed promptly for Emergency Management Procedures and compliance with attendance recording regulations;
7. Rolls will be checked regularly by Directors of Learning / Heads of Schools and Administration Staff for Government requirement data collection and maintenance purposes.

Procedures for Following Up Unexplained Student Absences & Monitoring Attendance Issues

Teachers input absentees from their roll during the morning Home Group. The Administration Staff process all incoming calls and attendance emails. At approximately 9:30am, once all absentees' notifications and reasons for absentees have been processed, the Administration Staff contact Parents / Guardians of students with unexplained absentees. Attendance messages are primarily communicated via email.

Absence reports are emailed to the Executive Team at the end of each week.

During the course of the day, if there are any concerns about the accuracy of the daily attendance records, Staff are advised to contact the College Office for clarification. The Administration Staff will communicate this to either the Director of Learning / Head of School or Principal if the student's location is unknown.

Procedures to Identify Students with Poor Attendance Records

- The school attendance of every student is recorded in Home Group at the start of the day. The reason for any absence recorded must subsequently be substantiated, and recorded on the attendance system at the College Office using a set of approved absence codes;
- Home Group Teachers are required to notify the appropriate Director of Learning / Head of School on the third day of any absence, unless the College received prior notification. (Note that, in most cases, unexplained absences are followed up with Parents / Guardians via email contact on the day of the absence).

Once identified, any ongoing concerns about the regular attendance of a student will trigger a series of steps.

In the Primary school, the Classroom Teacher will work closely with the family and the Director of Learning - Primary School to address any concerns.

In the Secondary School, concerns about attendance will trigger the 'Procedures for Managing Concerns about Student Progress'. For VCE students this trigger will be activated before the attendance rate falls to 90%. The VCE Learning Coordinator needs to be aware of any situation where this is occurring.

Monitoring Attendance of Students Participating in Courses Provided by Another Senior Secondary Course Provider

The attendance of students at curriculum programs outside school premises needs to be recorded by the provider and reported back and recorded by the school. The Director of Learning – Senior School will manage absences in conjunction with the provider.

Attendance from external providers is emailed back to the College via the Director of Learning and the attendance email address at: attendance@ncc.vic.edu.au.

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The Principal will determine if the explanation provided for an absence is reasonable for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. The Principal should use their discretion in making this decision.

The Principal or their nominee must record:

- Student attendance twice per day in Primary schools and in every class in Secondary schools for every student enrolled at the College;

- The reason given for an absence and whether this is reasonable in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006;
- An absence as unexplained if no explanation has been given and change the attendance record once an explanation is provided or established.

Parents / Guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the necessary arrangements are made for their son / daughter to arrive at the College at the required time each day during school term time;
- Ensuring that their son / daughter attends school every day the College is open for instruction – including, but not limited to, attendance at excursions, carnivals, retreats, and camps planned by the College, as they are part of the educational program and attendance is compulsory;
- Responding to Absence & Lateness email messages (which they receive if their son / daughter has been marked absent or has arrived late without Parent / Guardian explanation) by replying via email message with an explanation, including their child's name, year, date of absence and reason for the absence or lateness;
- Making medical and dental appointments outside school hours (where possible);
- Advising the relevant Home Group Teacher if their child is expected to be absent for more than three days and detailing the reason for this absence (such as illness or other circumstances);
- Providing a Medical Certificate (with details of the nature of the illness) for their child should s/he suffer from an acute illness that necessitates extended leave from the College;
- Advising the relevant Home Group Teacher in writing of their (Parent / Guardian) absence from home for more than a few days and providing the name, address and phone numbers of someone to act for them during their absence;
- Putting in writing requests to the Principal for planned extended absences of 5 or more days during term time (for example, an overseas holiday).

Home Group Teachers are responsible for:

- Being punctual in attending to their daily Homeroom duties;
- Accurately marking student attendance data in the College Administration software (Seqta) and submitting it by 8:55am;
- Ensuring students do not mark the roll as this is a breach of the College's Duty of Care;
- Ensuring that the electronic roll marking system is correctly used, i.e. only students actually present in the room are to be recorded;
- Ensuring all students who arrive after 8.40am are directed to the College Office before going to class;
- Contacting a Parent / Guardian on the third day to ascertain a reason for the absence; if a student is absent from school for 3 consecutive days and the Parent / Guardian has made no attempt to contact the College. This rule also applies for 3 unexplained non-sequential absences. The outcome of this phone call is to be communicated to the College Office;
- Reporting to the Directors of Learning / Head of School any student attendance concerns such as

- Repeated absences
- Unusual absences
- Fraudulent notes.

Secondary School Subject Teachers are responsible for:

- Being punctual in attending to their scheduled class duties;
- Marking student attendance at the commencement of the lesson, recording data in the College Administration software (Seqta);
- Reporting unexplained absences from the class by immediately contacting the College Office to investigate student whereabouts;
- Notifying the Director of Learning for any student who misses a lesson without an acceptable explanation;
- Providing the College Office with the names of students on excursions / incursions, then advising the Office of any absences on the day of the excursion/incursion.

Office Administration Staff are responsible for:

- Checking that all Home Group attendance rolls have been digitally submitted daily (by 9:15am);
- Collecting explanation / absentee notes written by Parents / Guardians, if appropriate, for any absence from the College within 7 days of the student's return to the College (this is a legal requirement);
- Managing computer data entry including:
 - All daily explanations of student absences
 - All explanations of late student arrivals
 - All students who go home ill
 - All students who leave for appointments
 - All student sick bay attendance
 - Incursion and excursion attendance
 - Special event attendance;
- Following up on a Subject Teacher notification of a student's unexplained absence from a class by:
 - Confirming attendance in Home Group
 - Confirming attendance with previous Subject Teacher/s
 - Checking attendance with College Counsellor/s and other Support Staff
 - Alerting Directors of Learning / Head of School of the unexplained absence. Directors of Learning / Head of School to commence a search of the site and inform Parent / Guardian of ongoing unexplained absence;
- Recording absence type in the College Administration software (Seqta) on receipt of a Parent / Guardian explanation according to the Attendance Register Codes.

All students are responsible for:

- Ensuring their attendance is recorded in Home Group class;

- Signing in at the College Office, if they arrive after 8:40am;
- Attending every timetabled class, including Study Periods;
- Providing an explanation of lateness if their Parent / Guardian has not provided a written explanation to the College Office;
- Providing a signed permission note from a Parent / Guardian to leave the College grounds during school hours. The note must be approved and signed by the Home Group Teacher and Director of Learning / Head of School. Students must show the approved note to their Subject Teacher prior to the exit time. Students must then sign out at the College Office.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's three-year review cycle.

Related Policies

VCE Student Policy Handbook

VCE Staff Policy Handbook

Relevant Legislation

Community Services Act 1970 (Vic.)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007

Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013

References

Independent Schools Victoria. (2017). *Student Attendance*. Retrieved from <https://www.is.vic.edu.au/managing-a-school/compliance-framework/education-authority-accountability/student-attendance/>

Victorian Department of Education and Training. (2017, March). *School attendance guidelines*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority. (2019). *Minimum standards and other requirements for schools*. Retrieved from <https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/schools/Pages/standards-guidelines-requirements-for-schools.aspx>

Appendix 1: Victorian Attendance Legislation



Victorian Attendance Legislation

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers

Why are there new rules about attendance?

In March 2014, new legislation related to enrolment and attendance came into effect. For more information on the relevant legislation, see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>

Evidence shows that daily school attendance is important for young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally. Young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes across their lives.

The new laws sets out a process where students with poor attendance can be identified and interventions implemented. The rules are not in place to punish time away from school which was unavoidable or reasonable. Instead, the new laws are an effort to promote and improve school attendance across Victoria.

What is compulsory school age?

All children aged 6-17 years are required to either be enrolled at a registered school, or registered for home schooling.

In some circumstances a parent can apply to the Regional Director to exempt a child from enrolment at school. For more information see: [School Policy and Advisory Guide: Exemptions](#).

Whose responsibility is it to ensure my child goes to school?

School attendance is mandated under the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006*. It is

the responsibility of parents/ carers to ensure their child regularly attends school.

How is attendance recorded by schools?

Schools must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and in every class in secondary schools.

My child attends a non-government school. Do these requirements still apply to me and my child?

The new rules apply to parents of compulsory school-aged children, and all Victorian Government, Independent and Catholic Schools.

Processes for following up attendance

What is considered as 'poor attendance' for the purpose of the new legislation?

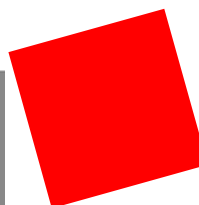
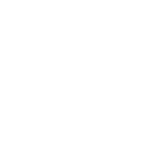
Under the new legislation, if a student reaches five days of unapproved or unexplained absence within a school year then further action can be taken, at the discretion of the principal.

What are unexplained or unapproved absences?

A principal has the discretion to approve or not approve any absence, either based on an individual school policy or on a case-by-case basis.

Unexplained Absence:

A principal will record an absence as 'unexplained' if no explanation about the absence given to the school by the parent or carer of the student.



If you do not contact the school to provide an explanation on the day of the student absence, the school must attempt to contact you either by phone or in writing within three days to seek a reason for the absence.

If no contact can be made with you or other carers of the child within 10 days, the absence will be recorded as an unexplained absence and also be noted in your child's file. You can contact the principal at any time after the record has been made to provide an explanation.

Unapproved Absence:

In general, a principal would record an absence as 'unapproved' when no reasonable excuse has been given for the student's absence. If a reason you give for an absence is not approved by the principal of your child's school you will be notified in writing.

What action will be taken if my child reaches five days of unapproved or unexplained absence?

If your child reaches five days of unapproved or unexplained absence then the school and principal will work with you to implement appropriate supports or interventions to assist you get your child to school every day.

If, these interventions do not improve your child's attendance, the principal may decide to make a referral to the School Attendance Officer. For more information on the School Attendance Officer, see: [School Attendance Officers](#).

What happens when the referral is made to the School Attendance Officer?

The School Attendance Officer will investigate the absences and may take one or all of the following steps depending on the circumstances.

- Issue a School Attendance Notice
- Issue an Official Warning
- Issue an Infringement Notice.

I have been issued a School Attendance Notice – what does this mean?

The School Attendance Notice is not a fine but rather an opportunity for your family to explain the absences and work with your child's school to improve attendance in the future.

The School Attendance Officer will assess your family's response to a School Attendance Notice. For more information, including how a School Attendance Officer assesses your family's response, see: [School Attendance Notices](#).

I have received a School Attendance notice - but my child was not with me on the date listed, what can I do?

The School Attendance Notice gives you the opportunity to state the parent who the child was living with on the dates of absence. You should complete this part of the notice and return to the School Attendance Officer by the due date outlined on the Notice.

I have been issued with an Official Warning. What does this mean?

A School Attendance Officer may decide to issue an Official Warning prior to, or instead of issuing an Infringement Notice.

For more information see: [When to Issue an Official Warning](#).

Under what circumstances can I be issued with an Infringement?

Under the new legislation an Infringement Notice will only be used as a last resort, after other strategies to improve attendance have been implemented and failed.

For more information see: [Infringement Notices](#).

Can I appeal if I think an Infringement Notice has been issued unfairly?

If you have received an Infringement Notice and you think it has been issued unfairly, you can apply for an internal agency review. For more information on the grounds for review and the process for lodging a review request, visit: [Infringement Notices](#) (see 'Appeals').

How much is the fine?

Should an Infringement Notice (fine) be issued, it will be half a penalty unit. The monetary value of a penalty unit is calculated by the Treasurer and changes each financial year. Generally, an infringement notice will be approximately \$70

Types of absence

My child misses lots of school because they are sick, does this mean I will get a fine?

A genuine illness is considered a reasonable excuse.

While your child is absent, you should continue to update the school on the scenario and work with the school to develop a Student Absence Learning Plan to ensure that the student's educational needs are supported and they do not fall behind in their schoolwork.

You may also wish to discuss other, more flexible, options for accessing an education if it is predicted your child will be absent for long periods of time due to their ill health. Your principal will be able to advise if such arrangements, including Distance Education, are appropriate.

My child attends remedial tutoring or classes outside school, but during school hours. Will this contribute to absences that lead to me receiving a fine?

An individual principal has the discretion to decide whether absence caused by attending remedial class or tutoring will be approved or unapproved. In general, it is expected that the family and the school work together to identify the educational needs of the child, and address within the school setting and school hours.

I want to take my child for an extended holiday during the school term. Is this ok? What can I do to ensure that they are supported to learn? Will I be fined?

If you are planning an extended holiday, discuss this with your school principal well in advance of finalising any plans. The principal has the discretion to decide whether or not to approve the absence.

If the principal decides not to approve the absence, you should work with the school to decide on a reasonable length of absence or more mutually convenient time for the holiday.

If you decide to go ahead with a holiday during school term despite it being an 'unapproved' absence and the duration of the absence is over five days, the principal may choose to refer the case to the School Attendance Officer for further action, which may result in an Infringement Notice being issued.

If the principal approves the absence, work with your child's school so you support your child's education during their holiday. visit: [School](#)

[Attendance Guidelines - Resources](#) (see: Student Absence Learning Plan)

My child attends part time due to a disability. Will I receive a fine?

Full time attendance is compulsory for all students aged 6-17. However, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate for students with a disability to attend school for reduced hours. This arrangement should only be entered into on a short-term basis and only if it is agreed by all parties (school, family, practitioners, regions) that the reduced attendance is in the best interest of the child.

If your child is attending school for reduced hours as part of a plan that both outlines the return to full-time schooling and has been developed in consultation with your child's school, this will be considered an approved absence and will not be referred to a School Attendance Officer.

For more information contact the Disability Coordinator at your closest departmental Regional Office for further advice. See: [Regions](#).

Without my knowledge, my child skipped school. Will I get a fine?

Truancy is defined under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 as absence due to the child's disobedience and not due to any fault of the parent. It is therefore deemed a reasonable excuse and will not count towards the total of unapproved or unexplained absences.

If truancy is a continuing issue for your child you should work with the school to develop plans or strategies to support their continuing engagement in school and to prevent further truancy. For more information on strategies and supports available see: [Strategies to Improve a Student's Attendance](#).

My child is refusing to go to school. Will I receive a fine? And what can I do to get them back to school?

School refusal is considered a reasonable excuse for absence and if supports and interventions are being sought, should not count towards unexplained or unapproved absence. It is important in these circumstances that you

clearly communicate your situation and concerns with your child's school.

You should work with your child's school to find the best way to improve attendance in these situations. Schools have the flexibility to modify the school experience for students so that it better caters to their needs, goals and strengths. For more information on the supports and interventions to support your child see: [Strategies to Improve a Student's Attendance](#) and: [My Child Has Anxiety About Going to School](#)

My child is employed in the entertainment industry and is missing school regularly. Will I get a fine?

If the child is due to be employed in the entertainment industry at length a School Exemption may be an option. The process for applying for these exemptions is outlined in the School Policy and Advisory Guide. Non-government schools are also advised to follow these procedures. For more information, see: [Attendance - Exemption Application Process.](#)

I have been issued a School Enrolment Notice. What does this mean?

All children of compulsory school age (6-17) must be enrolled in school or registered for homeschooling.

If you have been issued with a School Enrolment Notice this means that the School Attendance Officer has become aware that there is no record that your child or children are enrolled in school or registered for home schooling.

The School Enrolment Notice is not a fine. Instead, it is an opportunity for your family to work with the School Attendance Officer to ensure your child is enrolled at school or properly registered for home schooling.

For more information see: [Enrolling Your Child in School or Registering for Home Schooling.](#)

Appendix 2: Attendance Letter

<Parent Names>

<Address>

<Address>

Wednesday 1st February 2017

RE: ATTENDANCE OF CONCERN

Dear <Parent Names>,

As of today, <student> has been late to school on <number> occasions during the first five weeks of Term 1 during 2017.

Valuable minutes of instructional time are missed each time your student is late or absent. At Northside Christian College, we are committed to providing the best education possible for your child. Regrettably, this process is adversely affected by poor attendance and late arrivals. Research indicates that students who attend school regularly learn more and are more successful in school than students who do not.

The morning Home Group time, which commences at 8:40 am, often includes a time for announcements, distribution of correspondence and morning prayer and devotions. This is an important part of the day at Northside Christian College.

Please call the College Office if you have questions concerning your child's attendance at school. I am endeavouring to work together to resolve this attendance concern as soon as possible.

We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential in the education of children. I wish to thank you in advance for your assistance with this matter. I will continue to monitor <student's> attendance and progress throughout the 2017 academic school year. Please let me know if you would like to meet to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Michael Bond
Deputy Principal

Appendix 3: Going Up the Street at Lunch Time

<Parent Names>

<Address>

<Address>

Monday 26th April 2017

TO: YEAR 11 AND 12 STUDENTS AND PARENTS / GUARDIANS

RE: GOING UP THE STREET AT LUNCH TIME

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to inform you that the College has updated the procedures around Year 11 and 12 students travelling up the street to visit the nearby shops at lunch time.

In the attached permission form, the College has further highlighted the expectation that students must be up to date with their homework and online lessons in order to be able to leave the College grounds to visit the local food outlets at lunch. Leaving the College grounds is considered a special privilege for Year 11 and 12 students at Northside Christian College. We trust you will understand our desire to develop stronger structures to support student learning at the College.

During the school day, Northside Christian College assumes a duty of care for all students at the College. Students are only able to leave the College grounds during the day with permission from their Parent or Guardian. When permissions are provided, the College is able to transfer the duty of care to the Parent or Guardian for the time the student is out of the College grounds. Students who leave College grounds may be subject to accidents and / or incidents which may occur and cause injury without any fault on the part of the student, Northside Christian College, the Committee of Management, or its employees / agents. By choosing to leave College premises, you are assuming the full risk of an accident or incident occurring. It is the wish of the College that students remain on the College grounds whenever possible to further minimise risks for students.

Please find attached an updated permission form for the 2017 academic school year. Should you have any questions in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Principal or myself.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Michael Bond
Deputy Principal

Mr Damian Higgins
Principal

cc: VCE Learning Coordinator

GOING UP THE STREET AT LUNCH TIME

During the school day, the College assumes a duty of care for all students at Northside Christian College. Students are only able to leave the College grounds during the day with permission from their Parents or Guardians. When permissions are provided, the College is able to transfer the duty of care to the Parents or Guardians for the time the student is out of the College grounds. Year 11 and 12 students have the privilege of being allowed to leave the College grounds during lunch times. There are limits to this privilege:

- Students are only allowed to leave the College to go up the street at the appointed lunch time and at no other time. Students must arrive back before the bell at the end of lunch.
- Students are only allowed to go to the shops along Plenty Road, as far down Plenty Road as KFC and as far up Plenty Road as ALDI.
- Students are not allowed to go anywhere else (i.e. Norris bank Reserve).
- Students are not to board a tram or any other form of public transport during the lunch break.
- Students may drive their own vehicle down to the shops but no other student is permitted to travel in any car other than their own.
- Any student leaving the College grounds must sign out before leaving the College and sign back in upon returning to the College. Students may not sign any other student in or out.
- Students are not permitted to purchase lunch for students in other year levels.

Additional conditions

It is a privilege to be able to leave the College grounds during lunch time. Students who are not up to date with assigned homework and online lessons may not leave the College grounds during lunch time to visit shops, etc. Assigned work requirements will be reviewed each Wednesday for the following week.

Student Name

Year Level

I have read and understood the above guidelines and agree to abide by all the rules stated in this agreement. Furthermore, I understand the College has other relevant policy documents relating to attendance, behaviour, student travel in vehicles and the completion of assigned school work. I understand that my privileges will be suspended or revoked if I do not follow these guidelines.

Student Signature..... Date: ____/____/____

We have read and understand the guidelines outlined in this document and agree that our child should abide by the above rules. I give permission for my child to leave the College grounds at lunchtimes to purchase lunch from the local shops.

Parent / Guardian Signature..... Date: ____/____/____

****A new permission slip must be filled out and returned each year in order to receive 'off-campus' carer privileges.**