

Title	Attendance Policy		
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1 Purpose

This policy is to outline the framework that Communicare Academy implements to monitor and manage the attendance of all students, to facilitate legislative compliance, and to maximise learning outcomes for students.

2 Scope

This policy applies to the students of Communicare Academy.

3 Policy

3.1 Student Attendance Expectations

The Academy expects students to attend every day where possible but understand that this is not possible for all students. Where there are extenuating external factors impacting the student's ability to attend, a Modified Timetable may be created for that student in consultation with the parent/guardian and the student. This allows the Academy to record absences during the acknowledged times as approved.

It is the parent's/guardian's legal obligation to ensure their child attends school for every day they are expected to.

3.2 Modified Timetables

Modified Timetables are designed in conjunction with the parent/guardian and student where factors such as family dysfunction, being a carer, mental health issues, hospital stays, for example, impact the student's ability to attend.

The aim of a Modified Timetable is to start small and build attendance as the student becomes more comfortable with the school environment, or where the factors impacting attendance have lessened. The Modified Timetables are reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

3.3 Reasons for Absence

Parents/Guardians are expected to notify the Academy of a student's absence as soon as possible. This can be done either by reply SMS to the Academy number or by calling reception on 08 6350 1872.

Acceptable Reasons for Absence	Unacceptable Reasons for Absence
- Sickness - Danger of being infected by someone else who is sick	- Truancy – just deciding not to go to school - Shopping – with or without parent/guardian

• Unavoidable significant cause, e.g. death of a close friend or family member, family trauma • Attending a school approved activity such as work experience • Sporting or cultural event • Caring for a family member • Necessary appointments – Centrelink, Psychology, healthcare related • Hospital stays or recuperation at home where a doctor has given a medical certificate	• Unnecessary appointments which could be made outside of school hours – such as haircuts, beautician appointments • Holidays • Staying away because a friend is absent
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3.4 Recording Attendance

Attendance is recorded by teaching staff each lesson of the day through SEQTA.

The attendance taken during Connect and Period 1 informs the report run in SEQTA by the Enrolments and Administration Officers (EAOs) of the student absences for that day. The EAOs then send absentee messages to parents/guardians in Period 1 to notify them of their child's absence.

If communication is received from the parent/guardian as to the child's reason for absence then the EAOs will record that against the student's name. If a pattern emerges, the EAOs will refer the student to the Student Services Team for follow up.

3.5 Prolonged Absence or Unacceptable Reasons

If a student continues to be absent without a satisfactory explanation, or there is a concern regarding that absence, or where a student's attendance is below 20% the EAOs will contact the parent/guardian to investigate the reasons for the student's absence. A record of this is made in SEQTA.

If there is no engagement from the parent/guardians or there is a pattern or attendance concern emerging, the EAOs will pass the student on to the Student Support Officer or Wellbeing Manager for support.

3.5.1 1.1.1 Students Whereabouts Unknown

If a student has a period of concerning absence as outlined in 3.5 and efforts to locate the student or contact the parents/guardians have failed the Academy EAOs will follow the Department of Education's process for listing a student whose whereabouts are unknown. Generally, this will follow the following process:

- Contact made to student's guardians
- Wellbeing Team attempt to visit student at home or arrange meeting outside of school
- Wellbeing Team or EAOs to contact student's emergency contacts
- EAOs check notifications of transfer and contact student's previous school
- Wellbeing Team to speak with peer group at school for information
- Wellbeing Team contact any outside agencies involved
- EAOs make contact with Participation Team
- Wellbeing Team file a referral to the Tracking Team for Students Whereabouts Unknown

- Student will remain on the Academy's roll until such time as we are advised otherwise by the SWU submission or receive a Transfer Note from another school

3.6 Withdrawal from the Academy

If the Wellbeing Manager or Student Services Team cannot engage with the parent/guardian, and support strategies have not worked, the parent/guardian will be formally invited to a meeting with the Principal. This is only when other attempts at engagement have otherwise failed and where the Student Services Team are satisfied there are no extenuating factors that are impacting engagement.

Should a parent/guardian attend the meeting, then a plan for attendance and support, including a Modified Timetable, will be agreed upon during the meeting. If the parent/guardian does not attend the meeting or cancels the meeting the EAOs will attempt to arrange a second meeting.

If the parent/guardian fails to attend the second meeting and there is no engagement from the parent/guardian or student, then the student's place at the Academy may be withdrawn.

A student may also be withdrawn due to severe behavioural issues or Code of Conduct breaks.

In the event of a student's withdrawal from the Academy a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian by the EAOs outlining the reasons for withdrawal and the attempts made to engage with the parent/guardian and student. The EAOs will finalise the students reports and records, file them appropriately, and send the parent/guardian any relevant work or documentation.

If a student is in Year 11 or 12 a referral will be made to the Participation Team (PT) for support. Until the student is accepted by the PT they will remain on our roll and the Wellbeing Team will continue to provide support and referrals to external education options.

If a student is in Years 7-10 and they are withdrawn from the Academy, the Wellbeing Team will provide support to the parent/guardian and student to engage in an alternative education option or school. The student will remain on our roll until such time as we receive a Transfer Note.

More detail of the withdrawal of a student's place at the Academy is contained in the *Removal of Student Procedure*.

3.7 Late Arrivals and Early Departures

Any arrivals/departures between 9am to 2:30pm will be recorded and a reason will be expected. If a student is consistently arriving late to school, then the reasons for this will be investigated. Supportive measures will be implemented as needed.

If a student needs to leave during the day due to illness/appointment/modified timetables or acceptable reasons, their parent/guardian will need to sign them out or give permission for their student to sign out and leave school. If students are consistently leaving early or are leaving early for unacceptable reasons, then supportive measures will be implemented, and contact made with parent/guardian as needed.

3.8 Unapproved departure from school grounds

If a student leaves school grounds without permission staff will immediately notify the parent/guardian. A re-entry meeting will need to be booked before that student can return. During this meeting the parent/guardian, Principal, and student will need to discuss the departure and identify strategies to prevent it happening again.

If there are concerns for the student's safety after they have left school grounds, the Academy Leadership Team will contact the relevant Emergency Services authority, or any other authority as needed, to ensure the student's safety.

4 Responsibilities

Principal	- Ensuring the policy is administered appropriately. - Ensuring the policy and procedures are being followed.
Head of Student Support & Compliance	- Ensuring all students are enrolled in the correct classes within SEQTA to facilitate accurate attendance marking. - Ensuring all staff have the correctly assigned classes and ability to mark their rolls. - Ensuring all staff have access to SEQTA. - Ensuring the policy and procedures are current.
Enrolments and Administration Officers	- Ensuring absentee messages are sent every day. - Ensuring reasons for absences are recorded appropriately. - Referring students with unsatisfactory or concerning attendance. - Booking meetings with parents/guardians of students with attendance concerns. - Posting letters regarding attendance concerns and withdrawals as directed by the Principal. - Contacting the Participation Team and referring when needed. - Maintaining accurate SEQTA records.
Teachers	- Ensuring attendance is marked each period. - Notifying Student Services and the EAOs of any attendance concerns noted.
Parents/Guardians	- Ensuring their child is attending school on the days and times they are timetabled. - Contacting the school immediately if their child is unable to attend on a timetabled day, and the reason for their absence. - Understanding that lengthy, unexplained absences or absences without appropriate communication will result in the student being referred to the Participation Team.
Wellbeing Team	- Supporting student engagement - Monitoring attendance and making contact with parents/guardians - Making referrals to external agencies, including Participation Team and Tracking Team

5 Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions

Parent/Guardian	The person holding legal responsibility for that student whether it is a birth parent, step-parent, adoptive parent, family member, or the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support.
CaRE School	A Curriculum and Re-engagement in Education school, established and registered solely for the education of students at educational risk.
Educational Risk	A student is at educational risk if they are of compulsory school age but are unable to participate in mainstream schooling due to disadvantage, family dysfunction, criminal behaviour, mental health issues, and other such factors.

6 Related Documents/Legislation

	School Education Act 1999
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	School Education Regulations 2000
	Parental Support and Responsibility Act (WA) 2008
	Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools
CA-POL-0006	Student Behaviour Support Policy
CA-POL-0021	Enrolment Policy
CA-POL-0057	Leaving Studies Policy
CA-POL-0086	Home Visit Policy
CA-PRO-0009	Home Visit Procedures
CA-PRO-0001	Removal of Student Procedure
CA-PRO-0006	Enrolment Procedure

7 Document Governance

Prepared by:	Sharmain Tang	Head of Student Support & Compliance	20/10/2021
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