



Statement

The Compulsory Education Legislation, implemented at the beginning of 2009, requires all young people between the ages of 6 and 17 to participate in a full-time approved learning program. Children who are not of compulsory age but who have enrolled at a preschool or school are subject to the same participation requirements as those students of compulsory age. Attendance and participation requirements for a particular child of non-compulsory age may be modified to meet his or her specific needs. This should be arranged by negotiation between the preschool or school, the child and parents/caregivers.¹

Purpose

The *Education and Children's Service Act 2019* requires that children of compulsory school age be enrolled at school. A condition of that enrolment is that a student is required to fully participate in the education program arranged and approved by the enrolling school. Such participation is to include engagement and attendance as required by the program.

Implementation:

- Bethany Christian School will monitor student attendance in accordance with AISSA guidelines and in adherence to the Education and Children's Service Act 2019 and the Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007.
- It is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to notify the Administration office if their child will not be attending school. Notice can be made via email, a phone call to the school or via the BCS App.
- Contact will be made with a student's parent/guardian if they absent from school.
- Unless it is clearly stated by a certified Court Order, both parents/carers will be notified by SMS if their child is absent from school without prior notification.
- Where a student is absent due to reported illness for ten or more days in any school term medical evidence may indicate that a care plan is required from the treating health professional to enable the school to provide safe health support for the student to enable improved attendance.
- If Bethany Christian School has concerns over repeated or extended absences due to a chronic illness or injury, advice may be sought by a senior management staff member to liaise with parents, Diverse Learning and the Wellbeing team and a medical practitioner to support the ongoing educational requirements met while recuperating at home. An application for exemption from school enrolment/attendance and educational enrolment/participation Form C must be filled in by the student's parent, the Diverse Learning and the Wellbeing team and signed by the Principal or delegated authority.
- Parents are required to notify the Front office staff of their intended family vacation, or a leave of absence for any of the reasons cited above. They will be provided the relevant ED175 Form in hard, printed form.
 - **ED175 Form A:** Only for students who are going on a family vacation, resulting in an absence **15 school days or more** (as per our Attendance Policy and Procedures 2020`).
 - **ED175 Form C:** For students who require conditional part time attendance for a short term (up to 4 weeks) for disability, behaviour, health or medical reasons.
 - **ED175 Form B:** For exemptions from school for a period **greater than 12 months**, for an overseas exchange, participation in elite sports or full time non-School education.

¹ Statement taken directly from DECD "Attendance Requirements for Schools" April 2009



- The parent will fill it in at the desk for immediate submission. Approval must be given by the Principal or her delegated authority. Parents will be informed if their application for student absence has been not approved.
- Electronic copies of the two forms can be obtained from the front office.
- **All forms must be stored in the student's school file and kept for up to 7 years.**
- All written explanations, replies to absentee notes, medical certificates and other documentation not pertaining to Form A, B or C are to be kept in student files for a period of one year.
- All information pertaining to non-attendance must be recorded. Such information may be in the form of phone calls, contact with homes and/or any mandatory notification.
- Absences due to sickness, danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease, temporary or permanent infirmity, events of cultural significance (can include births, deaths and related ceremonies), other events approved by the School Council or any other unavoidable and sufficient cause are legally acceptable.
- Where sufficient concern over a student's attendance is noted, Bethany Christian School will issue the parents or caregivers an Attendance Report identifying the concerns regarding the student's attendance and the risks that are associated with ongoing absence from school.

Temporary Exceptions

- Principals have the authority to approve temporary exemptions for up to 12 months for the reason of Family Travel / Holiday. If more than one month and for reasons other than travel/family holiday, the application requires approval by the Director, Programs and Regional Management (Central Delegate) or the Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (Independent Schools).²

Chronic or Habitual Non-Attendance

- Habitual non-attendance is considered where a student has 5 or more absences per term (average of 1 day per fortnight) then the issues of absenteeism for that student will be investigated by a senior management staff member for possible chronic non-attendance.
- Chronic non-attendance is considered where a student is absent for 10 days or more per term (an average of 1 day per week) then the issues of absenteeism for that school should be analysed for possible chronic non-attendance.

Mandatory Notification Responsibility in relation to Student Non-Attendance

- The *Children and Young People's (Safety) Act 2017* requires teaching staff to notify Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected. This responsibility is part of the broad duty of care that staff and volunteers have towards the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Under the *Children and Young People's (Safety) Act 2017*, persistent non-attendance at school is identified within the interpretation of "at risk" – Part 1, 6 (2) *the child is of compulsory school age but has been persistently absent from school without satisfactory explanation of the absence.*

Legislative Context

[Education and Children's Service Act 2019](#)

[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#)

[Education and Early Childhood Services \(Registration and Standards\) Act 2011\(SA\)](#)

² Excerpt taken directly from AISSA's "Student Attendance" doc, Sept 2014 in accordance to Section 81A (1) of the Education Act 1972.



[Education Act 2013 \(Cth\)](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

Relevant Conventions

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[The United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child](#)

Relevant Standards and Frameworks

[Australian Student Wellbeing Framework 2018](#)

[Protective Practices 2019](#)

[Age Guidelines – Effective 1 January 2009](#)

[National Quality Framework](#)

[Safe & Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 - 2031](#)

[Child Safe Organisations National Principles](#)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)

[Attendance requirements for schools DECD April 2009](#)

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Authorised by (position title):	Review date:
In consultation with:	Approved: Yes/No