



## St Bishop Coptic Orthodox College

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### Compulsory School Attendance Information and guidelines for parents (Update 2015)

Section 25 of the Education Act 1990



In NSW, all students from the age of six years are legally required to attend school. After they complete Year 10 and until they reach the age of 17 years, students have the following options:

- full-time education and training or
- full-time, paid employment of an average of 25 hours a week or
- a combination of the above

#### **What are parents responsible for?**

- Ensuring that children attend all school activities, on time.
- Providing in writing, reasons for absence or lateness.

#### **What is the School responsible for?**

- Keeping accurate and detailed records of when students are absent or late.
- Providing absence/lateness records on a regular basis to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).
- Storing records for a number of years.

A small number of absences may be permitted by the Principal. For example, if your child:

- has a serious and/or urgent family situation to attend
- is too sick to go to school or has an infectious illness

#### **What is the Principal responsible for?**

The Principal is responsible for accepting or not a parent's explanation for their child's absence. The Principal may request further information from parents for long or frequent absences, even when they are explained by parents as being due to illness.

When absences are unexplained by parents, or the explanations are not accepted by the Principal, the School will work with parents to help address the issue.

#### **What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?**

If the School is unable to work with families to resolve the issue of unacceptable absences, parents may have to attend compulsory attendance conferences with officers of the Department of Education and Communities. Further action could include application to the Children's Court for a compulsory schooling order, or prosecution in the Local Court.

## Guidelines for Student Attendance at St Bishoy Coptic Orthodox College

All students are expected to attend school every day of each term. This includes events such as: carnivals, excursions and camps.

### ***What should families do if a student is absent or late?***

- On the day of absence/lateness, please notify Reception by email or phone, of the reason for the absence/lateness.
- On return to school, or within seven days of the absence/lateness, students must deliver a note of explanation to their classroom teacher (if student in Primary) and/or to their Homeroom Teacher (if student is in secondary). The note must be hand signed and dated by a parent or guardian.

If the absence/lateness is due to an appointment, the nature of the appointment must be clearly identified in the note of explanation.

The College's Absence Note is the preferred form of communicating with SBC for absence or lateness explanations.

- If a student's absence is frequently noted as sick or unwell, the College may request further documentation to support parent/guardian notes of explanation.

Please note that students who submit medical certificates cannot return to College until the date notified on the medical certificate. Students wishing to return to College before that date must provide written permission from a medical practitioner. This written permission will be evaluated by the College and permission to return will be granted or declined.

### ***What happens if a note of explanation is not provided?***

When absences or lateness remain unexplained (written reasons have not been provided) for seven days or more, parents/guardians will receive a letter from the College requesting a written explanation. Students will be noted as absent until an acceptable note of explanation is received by the College.

### ***How do parents apply for leave of absence for extended leave- holidays or travel?***

Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during College vacations. If travel during College term **unavoidable**, written application must be made on an Application for Extended Leave form. Please note that the College is not permitted to accept hand written notes from parents. The form must then be sent to the Head of College for processing.

Secondary College applications for extended leave must be made at least one month in advance to allow the consequences of the leave to be considered. Upon the receipt of applications for leave, Heads of Department will be consulted about the educational consequences of the leave.

If leave is approved, a Certificate for Extended leave will be provided to families.

When applying for leave, parents/guardians should be mindful of the disruption to education that can occur. Of course, in exceptional family circumstances, leave is granted. Some applications may be declined if they are deemed to be inappropriate.

Parents/guardians should also be aware that, for students in Years 7-12, assessment tasks missed during non-approved periods of leave will be awarded zero marks.

***What happens when students arrive late?***

All late students must report to Reception upon arrival at the College. The student will be provided with a slip that must be handed to the teacher of the class they are late joining. Secondary College students will have their Diary stamped to acknowledge their lateness. If students are late due to reasons other than late buses or trains, written explanation for the lateness must be provided. This may be done via the preferred College Absence Note.

***What happens when students wish to leave early?***

Parents/guardians of students wishing to leave before the end of the College day must provide a note of explanation detailing the time, reasons for leaving early and notification of who will sign out the student. This may be done via the College Absence Note.

To fulfil the College's duty of care, the College cannot allow others to sign out students. Parents/guardians of secondary College students may advise that the student has permission to leave the College grounds without parent or guardian sign-out.

Primary students follow this procedure:

- Students give their note to their class teacher.
- Parents/guardians or the nominated person picking up the student report to Reception at the nominated time
- Reception provides a leaving slip that is taken to the class teacher
- Students are collected from Reception

Secondary students follow this procedure:

- On arrival at College, students hand in their notes to Reception
- Parents/guardians or the nominated person collect the students from Reception at the nominated time.
- Reception provides a leaving slip that is taken to the class teacher
- Students are called from the classroom and collected from Reception