



## Safe and Supportive Environment

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

#### 1 PREFACE

Sathya Sai College, Ltd. is hereby referred to as 'the College'.

The College's policies are made pursuant to the NESAs requirements for registered and accredited non-government schools under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) ('the Education Act').

#### 2 OBJECTIVES

By implementing this policy, the College aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Continuity of education is maximised for each student
- The College's expectations and requirements for attendance are clearly articulated and communicated to the College community
- The College complies with its legal obligations regarding attendance and duty of care.

#### 3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, students, and parents/guardians.

#### 4 PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

##### 4.1 Regulatory Commitments

In NSW it is a legal requirement that all children between the ages of 6 and 17 years receive schooling. After completion of Year 10 a young person has alternative options to school if they have not reached the age of 17 years. Parents/guardians are responsible for making sure that their children comply with these legal requirements. The College is required to support parents/guardians by monitoring student attendance and helping to address attendance issues when they emerge.

The College is also under a duty of care to prevent harm to students from foreseeable risks. As part of fulfilling this duty of care, the College establishes rules and procedures for student attendance, arrivals and departures.

- The Principal maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual*.
- The exception method (marking absences only) is followed, using the NSW Attendance Register Codes.

- The College has procedures in place to follow up unexplained absences. The College notifies parents and/or guardians of poor school attendance and records unsatisfactory attendance information in the student files.
- The College addresses unsatisfactory attendance and works with parents/guardians and students to improve attendance.

## **4.2 Attendance**

The College regards regular attendance as vital to the continuity of a student's education. As such, it is expected that students attend school regularly and punctually, and that parents/guardians assist students to do so.

All students are expected to maintain an attendance rate of above 85%.

Students are required to attend and arrive punctually to all their timetabled lessons and activities.

Students are expected to be present on the College campus/es from 8:45 am to 2:55 pm on school days.

## **4.3 Late Arrivals**

Students arriving at College after 9:00 am must sign in at the relevant campus office as a late arrival. Students arriving after 9:00 am will be recorded as a partial absence.

## **4.4 Planned Absences**

Planned student absences (late arrivals, early departures, or absence for a period of the school day) are permitted in certain circumstances. The Principal deems the following as acceptable reasons for a planned absence:

- Doctors appointment or specialist appointment
- Funerals
- Religious festivals or ceremonial occasions
- Domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member.

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may deem other reasons for absence to be acceptable, and may approve leave where an application by the student's parents/guardians has been made.

Planned absences will be recorded as either partial or full day absences, with the reason for approved absence being noted as 'accepted by the Principal'.

### **4.4.1 Early Departures**

In the case of planned absences, a student will only be permitted to leave a College campus early when:

- The student has an explanation note for the planned absence, written by the student's parents/guardians; this may be handed in or emailed; a verbal explanation from the student's parents/guardians is also acceptable
- The student has been signed out at and collected from the office by her/his/their parents, guardians or proxy if stated in the permission note

Under no circumstances can one student at the College sign out another student.

Upon return to College, all students must sign back in at their campus office.

#### **4.4.2 Exemptions from School Enrolment or Attendance**

The Principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelling a Certificate of Exemption from being enrolled or attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, the Principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education (*Exemption from School – Procedures*).

An exemption from attendance can only be granted by the Principal and will not be granted retrospectively.

The Principal may grant a full-day exemption for the following reasons:

- Exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
- The child being prevented from attending College because of a direction under the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW)
- Employment in the entertainment industry
- Participation in elite arts or elite sporting events.

The Principal may grant a part day exemption for the following reasons:

- Students participating in elite arts or elite sporting programs (where regular attendance of training is required)
- The requirements of a student's health care plan
- The requirements of school-based programs (e.g. behaviour management transition plans, return to school after injury, reintroduction plan after suspension).

The Principal may grant up to 100 days of full-day and/or part-day exemptions in a twelve-month period for any one student.

Where an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted, the student's attendance will be recorded as either a part or full day absence, with the reason for absence being noted as 'exempted from attending School'.

Parents/guardians may appeal the Principal's decision regarding an attendance exemption. Appeal procedures will comply with the principles of procedural fairness.

#### **4.4.3 Travel During Term**

The College encourages families to take holidays during the school vacation periods. Travel during term is strongly discouraged as it may impact negatively upon a student's continuity of education.

The Principal will only approve travel during school term if she/he/they determine it is in the best interest of the student. If the Principal deems travel during term appropriate, the student's guardians will need to apply for, and be issued with, a *Certificate of Extended Leave*.

Applications for a *Certificate of Extended Leave* must be made to the Principal a minimum of four weeks before the start date of the proposed period of leave. Applications submitted after this time will not normally be considered for approval.

The Principal may place certain conditions on the granting of a *Certificate of Extended Leave*, such as the student adheres to an individual learning program while travelling. The student and their parents/guardians must honour these conditions.

A *Certificate of Extended Leave* will not be issued where the Principal is aware that the student has been the subject of a Child Protection report made to Family and Community Services, or contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit, and for whom unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm remain.

Where a *Certificate of Extended Leave* has been granted, the reason for a student's absence will be recorded as 'accepted by the Principal'. All other absences relating to travel will be recorded as 'unjustified'.

Where the conditions of the *Certificate of Extended Leave* have not been met, the student's attendance will be recorded as an unjustified absence.

#### **4.5 Unplanned Absences**

Where a student is absent due to illness or unforeseen exceptional circumstances, an explanation, written and signed by the student's parents/guardians, must be submitted to the College within seven (7) days of the student's absence. Where no written explanation is provided, or the Principal does not accept the reasons provided for absence, the absence will be recorded as 'unjustified'.

#### **4.6 Consequences for Truancy, Lateness & Poor Attendance**

Students found guilty of truancy will be required to make up the time missed from lessons.

When a student's attendance rate drops below 85%, the student and the student's parents/guardians will be required to attend an interview with the Principal and relevant support staff to develop and agree upon an action plan to improve the student's attendance (attendance improvement plan). Where a student's absence is due to continuing bad health, an individual learning plan (ILP) will be developed in conjunction with/in place of an attendance improvement plan.

If the student's attendance remains unsatisfactory regardless of the implementation of an attendance improvement plan, the student and their parents/guardians will be given the option of withdrawing the student's enrolment or attending compulsory attendance conferences with an official conference convenor. Continued poor attendance may result in the issue of compulsory schooling orders and further legal action being taken against the student's parents/guardians.

#### **4.7 Impact of Absences on Course Completion Requirements**

The Principal may decide that a student has been sufficiently absent to not satisfy the course completion requirements for Stage 5 courses. This may result in the student not meeting the eligibility requirements for the award of a Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

Absence during an approved attendance exemption cannot contribute to a non-satisfactory completion decision by the Principal. However, the Principal must arrange for course outcomes to be addressed during planned absence or on holidays.

Year 10 school leavers will not be awarded a RoSA if they do not attend school up to and until the final day of Year 10.

## **5 RELATED LEGISLATION**

- *Education Act 1990* (NSW)
- *Exemption from School – Procedures, 2015*, Department of Education and Communities (Learning and Engagement Directorate)
- *NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual*

## **6 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The School Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed for effectiveness and updated on a regular basis.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented through the development and implementation of action plans, procedures and other documentation. The Principal is also responsible for ensuring that these documents are monitored for implementation, reviewed for effectiveness and updated on a regular basis.



*Sathya Sai College Ltd.*

### ***STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES***

Related Policy: Safe and Supportive Environment: Attendance Policy

The Principal supervises the keeping of a register of daily attendance, which notes absences, reasons for absence and any documentation to substantiate reasons for absence. The exception method (marking absences only) is followed, using the NSW Attendance Register Codes.

There is clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

The school undertakes all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within three school days of an unexplained absence occurring.

Attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.

School staff is provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.

The register of enrolments and the register of daily attendances are maintained in electronic form. Copies of the information in the register of enrolment and the register of daily attendance are stored off-site at regular intervals. Records are kept for 7 years after last entry made.

All teachers are expected to maintain accurate daily Class Rolls as a requirement of the Education Reform Act 1990. SSC has in place the following procedures to ensure compliance:

**The Register of Daily Attendance includes:**

- Record of daily attendance
- Record of absences
- Reasons for absences
- Documentation to substantiate reason for absence
- Record of late arrival and early departure
- 

**Daily Attendance Recording** (applies at Primary and Secondary Campus)

- 1 Each Class Teacher marks the Class Roll and submits the entry on the College Database - Sentral. The School Secretary at each campus checks the Roll Status to ensure all rolls have been submitted.

**Absences Recording Process**

- 1 All students arriving late or leaving early are required to notify the relevant campus School Secretary who updates the database, with times and reasons for absence.
- 2 From the online Roll status information the School Secretary at each campus updates the daily bus list, noting which students are absent.
- 3 Each day the School Secretary at each campus enters all absence notes received via the <sup>TM</sup>SkoolBag app, email, phone call or note. Communication method is recorded in <sup>TM</sup>Sentral database.
- 4 Electronic absence notes and SkoolBag notifications, are saved in email file: Absence Notes. Hard copy written notes are saved at the Secretary's desk in the Attendance file.
- 6 Where parents have not contacted the school by the third day of absence the School Secretary at the relevant campus phones for an explanation and a note is made on the student's attendance file on the database.
- 7 At the end of each week a report of all 'unjustified' absences is generated. The School Secretary at the relevant campus then fills out the student name and dates on individual absence notes. These are handed out in each class to be taken home and completed by parents.
- 8 The Principal can set an 'Attendance Concern' on the database.
- 9 In the case of frequent absence the Principal will send a letter home to parents asking for an explanation.
- 10 If a satisfactory explanation is not received a second letter is sent along with an attendance report printed from the student file.
- 11 The Principal may call the parents in to discuss attendance and an attendance improvement plan to be agreed upon.

### ***Processing Applications for Extended Leave – Travel/Vacation***

1. On initial inquiry the parent is given an Application for Extended Leave form to complete.
2. The form needs to be completed in full (with travel documents attached where required).
3. Principal to complete and approve if appropriate.
4. Class Teacher will liaise with parents on work to be undertaken during period of leave
5. Original is scanned into student file and hard copy kept in student filing cabinet

### ***Processing Applications for Exemption from Attendance or Enrolment***

The Principal, in accordance with Section 25 of the Education Act 1990, may authorize Exemption from Attendance or Enrolment in special circumstances such as employment in approved entertainment industry activities, elite arts or elite sporting events.

1. On initial inquiry the parent is given the relevant Exemption from Enrolment or Attendance form to complete.
2. The form needs to be completed in full (with travel documents attached where required).
3. Principal to complete and approve if appropriate.
4. Class teacher will liaise with parents on work to be taken and submitted
5. Original is scanned into student file and hard copy kept in student filing cabinet

### **Special circumstance registers**

Attendance registers must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:

- 1 days on which there is part or full day industrial action involving teachers
- 2 approved school development days
- 3 days on which the school is inaccessible due to extreme weather events, such as fire or flood.





### Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

*(To be completed by student's parents/guardians and returned to the Principal)*

#### STUDENT DETAILS

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_ Given name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_(dd)/\_\_\_\_(mm)/\_\_\_\_(year)

Student's residential address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of exemption applied for: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Number of School Days: \_\_\_\_\_

#### REASON FOR APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION (Please tick ✓)

Exceptional domestic circumstances

Other exceptional circumstance

Direction under section 42D of the *Public Health Act 1991*

Employment in entertainment industry, participation in elite sporting event

Including for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice

Please provide more detail about the reason for the application for exemption here:

**NOTE:** Where the reason for application for exemption includes long term travel arrangements, of **more than 20 school days**, copies of travel documentation should be included with the application

**DETAILS OF PRIOR/CURRENT EXEMPTIONS (If applicable)**

Date of prior/current exemption from: \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of Certificate of Exemption attached (Please tick one box) : Yes  No

**PARENT DETAILS**

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_ Given name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent/s/guardian/s of the above mentioned student, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Exemption from attendance at school, under the Education Act 1990.

I understand that if the exemption is granted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption
- The exemption is limited to the period indicated
- The exemption is subject to the conditions listed on the Certificate of Exemption
- The exemption may be cancelled at any time.

I declare the information provided in this application for a certificate of exemption is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate and complete. I recognize that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognize that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the exemption may result in the exemption being revoked.

\*Signature/s of applicant/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_

\*Signature/s of applicant/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_

*\*Both parents' signatures are required, unless one parent has sole custody of the child.*

## PRIVACY STATEMENT

The School is subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. The information that you provide will be used to process your child's application for an exemption from the requirement to enrol at and/or attend school.

It will only be used or disclosed for the following purposes

- General student administration relating to the education and welfare of the student
- Communication with students and parents
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and visitors to the school
- State and National reporting purposes
- For any other purpose required by law

The information will be stored securely. You may access or correct any personal information by contacting the school. If you have a concern or complaint about the way your personal information has been collected, used, or disclosed, you should contact the school.



## Application for Extended Leave –Travel/Vacation

**NOTE: PARTS A, B and C** are to be **completed by the student’s parent** and returned to their child’s school principal.

**PART A: STUDENT DETAILS**

Please complete table below with details of all students at this school associated with the period of travel. Separate applications are required for each school if siblings do not attend the same school.

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE

Student address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of extended leave applied for: From: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for travel (including why this travel is occurring in school time):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Relevant travel documentation such as an e-ticket or itinerary (in the case of non-flight bound travel within Australia only) must be attached to this application.

**PART B: DETAILS OF PRIOR EXEMPTIONS/ EXTENDED LEAVE – TRAVEL (if applicable)**

Date of prior exemption/extended leave: From: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate of prior Exemption/Extended Leave -Travel attached (Please tick): Yes  No

**PART C: PARENT DETAILS**

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent and applicant, I hereby apply for a *Certificate of Extended Leave - Travel* and understand my child will be granted a period of extended leave upon acceptance by the principal of the reason provided.

I understand that if the application is accepted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of extended leave
- The provided period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated
- The provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed on the *Certificate of Extended Leave - Travel*
- The period of extended leave will count towards my child's absences from school.

I declare the information provided in this application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate and complete. I recognise that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognise that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the *Application for Extended Leave - Travel* may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.

Signature of parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Both parents' signatures are required, unless one parent has sole custody of the child.*

**PART D: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL**

I accept this *Application for Extended Leave - Travel*

(Please tick one box ):

Yes  No

Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Note: Please complete the *Certificate of Extended Leave - Travel* if requested leave is approved.**

The original certificate is to be given to the parent, with a copy kept on the student's file.

The parents should be advised to carry the Certificate as it may be requested by government officials including Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Police, Home School Liaison Officers etc.

# Certificate of Extended Leave – Travel

The student/s whose details appear below has/have been provided a period of extended leave from school for the purpose of travel.

*Note: Where an application is made by a parent with more than one child a separate copy of this Certificate should be placed in each student's file.*

## STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	Enrolment Register Number

Student address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_ School telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of extended leave: From: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for providing the period of extended leave:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions applicable to providing the period of extended leave:

\_\_\_\_\_

It has been explained to the parent of the above-mentioned student/s that they are responsible for his/ her supervision during the period of extended leave.

It has been explained to the parent that the period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated and the parent has acknowledged that the provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed.

Principal name: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.**

**Absence Note from parent/carer**

My child \_\_\_\_\_

Was unable to come to school on date: \_\_\_\_\_

Due to  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian signature .....

Date .....

Please return to Teacher  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Absentee Notice (1)**

Date:

**RE: ABSENTEE NOTICE (1)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, was absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ and no explanation has been received. Please assist us by completing the attached form and return it to school with your child as soon as possible.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the school on telephone 02 6670 8800 to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

.....

PRINCIPAL

REASON FOR ABSENCE: .....

.....

Signed .....

Date .....

I am aware that the roll is a legal document binding both parents and school to explain absence from school.

**Absentee Notice (2)**

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

**RE: ABSENTEE NOTICE (2)**

Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, was absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ and no satisfactory explanation has been received. *The Education Act 1990* requires your child to attend school each day that instruction is provided unless prevented from doing so by sickness or other good reason. The Act requires you to explain your child’s absences within seven days of their occurrence. Failure to do so will result in an unjustified absence being recorded.

Please provide an explanation in the space below and return this form to the school as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the school to discuss your child’s attendance.

Yours sincerely

.....

PRINCIPAL,

Sathya Sai College

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REASON FOR ABSENCE:

Signed .....

Date .....

## Referral to Home School Liaison Officer From Sathya Sai College

Primary Campus, 9 Nullum St, Murwillumbah NSW 2484 Secondary Campus, 16 Jack Williams Place, Dungay NSW 2484

<b>1. STUDENT DETAILS (PLEASE PRINT ALL DETAILS BELOW)</b>			
Student's surname	Given names	Date of birth	Sex (M/F)
Student's age	Year level student enrolled in		Length of time enrolled at referring school
Surname of parents/carers	Given names		Mr/Mrs/Ms
Residential Address			Postcode
Postal Address (if different from residential address)			Postcode
Telephone – Home	Work (if convenient)		Mobile Phone No
Are there any Family Court Orders regarding the day to day or long term care, welfare and development of the child? Please indicate (√) YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>2. SCHOOL DETAILS</b>			
Name of school		Name of Principal	
Telephone		Fax	
<b>1. DETAILS OF REFERRAL</b>			
This referral covers the period from _____ to _____			
Total number of school days to date of this referral	Total number of half-day absences to date		Total number of half-day unauthorised absences to date
Summary of problem			
Please indicate (√) actions taken by school: Contacted parents or carers to discuss attendance issues YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation with stakeholders, community groups or agencies YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Informal contact with DET school liaison officer to discuss solutions to attendance issues YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
Comments			
Signature of Principal			Date

## **Student Destination Unknown Notification**

This form has been prepared to provide a Department of Education and Communities Home School Liaison Officer (HSLLO) with details where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown.

### **School details**

Name of school

Location of school (street address)

### **Student details**

Student name:

Date of birth:

Last known address:

Last day of attendance:

### **Parent (guardian) details**

Parent (guardian) name(s)

Contact details of parent(s) (guardian)	Mailing address
	Telephone (home)
	Telephone (work)
	Telephone (mobile)

### **Further information**

Possible destination:

Other relevant information:

Any WHS risks associated with contacting the student or parent (guardian)



Sathya Sai College, Ltd.