## Policy Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Number: 30/2016</th>
<th>Date of Origin: May 2008</th>
<th>Modification History: January 2012 October 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of most recent review: October 2015</td>
<td>By Whom &amp; Position: Mrs Deborah Gillis Student Coordinator Years 11 and 12</td>
<td>Commencement Date: May 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Approval:**
This Policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team in October 2015

This Policy supersedes all previous policies relating to matters herein
Table of Contents

1.0 Rationale 3

2.0 Guiding Principles 3

3.0 Policy 3

3.1 Student Attendance Data Collection 3

3.2 Enrolment Procedures 3

3.5 Withdrawal of Enrolment 4

3.5 Absentee Line Procedure 4

3.7 Late Arrival / Early Leave Procedure 5

3.8 Request for Student Special Leave 6

3.9 Procedures for Absence 7

3.10 Management of Attendance Rolls 8

3.11 Application for Leave 11

3.12 Application for Exemption from Attendance at School 11

3.13 Exemption from Enrolment 12

4.0 Policy Review 13

5.0 Explanatory Notes and Definitions 13

6.0 Supporting Documents, Procedures and Guidelines 13
1.0 RATIONALE

1.1 Attending school every day makes learning easier and helps students to build and maintain friendships. At Oakhill College, the provision of effective teaching and learning is fundamental to the pastoral and academic care of students. Regular attendance and punctuality to school are integral to the learning process and therefore, the overall development and well-being of students.

1.2 This policy has been developed to demonstrate the College’s compliance with school attendance requirements for compulsory school-aged students as outlined by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training.

2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1 The law in NSW (Education Act 1990 / Amended 2009) states that a child is of compulsory school-age if the child is of, or above, the age of 6 years and below the minimum school leaving age. In January 2010 the NSW Government raised the mandatory school leaving age to 17 years. A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education but who is below the age of 17 years is of compulsory school age unless the child participates, on a full time basis, in approved education or training or if the child is in paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that this occurs. Unsatisfactory school attendance may affect the awarding of both the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

2.2 Students at Oakhill College are therefore, required to attend school every day unless there is an acceptable reason for non-attendance. Some examples of acceptable reasons for absence are illness, injury and misadventure.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Student Attendance Data Collection

Oakhill College, in line with STATS requirements and as part of the Australian Education Act 2013, will report student attendance rate data twice a year, in the first semester and Term 3. Oakhill College will report the proportions of students attending the College for 90 per cent or more of the time. As outlined by STATS, enrolment and attendance data is collected by gender, Indigeneity and Year level for full-time students enrolled in Years 7 to 10.

3.2 Enrolment Procedures

A register of enrolments that includes the following details will be maintained for each student at Oakhill College.

At the time of enrolment proof of residency, age and identity; a birth certificate or passport; is shown to the Principal's delegate, the College Registrar.
The following information is recorded for each student in the Enrolment Register:

- Name, age and address
- The name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Date of enrolment and information on previous school enrolment for a student older than 6 years
- When appropriate, the date of a student leaving the College and the student's destination and notifying the HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) at Department of Education and Training (DET) if the destination of a student of mandatory school age is unknown
- Data on absences where a student is absent 30 days, the Principal may access the mandatory reporters’ section of ‘Keep Them Safe’ website to determine if a report is required.

3.3 Oakhill College monitors electronically the daily attendance and absence of students by maintaining a daily register for each class of students in Sentral. (See Supporting Document 1, Screen Shot 1)

3.4 Student absences from class or from the College are identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff member responsible. The common code approved by the Minister is used. (See Supporting Document 1 Screen Shot 2)

3.5 Withdrawal of Enrolment

3.5.1 In the case where a parent/guardian wish to withdraw their child from Oakhill College, the parent is required to write a letter to the Principal indicating the following:

- that the student is leaving the College
- the date when the student will finish at the College
- the reason/s for leaving
- the school where the student will be enrolled.

3.5.2 Once the letter is received by the Principal, the student must complete a Student Sign-Out Form (See Supporting Document 2) which is available electronically in Sentral. The Student Sign-Out Form is to be completed before the student's last day at the College and returned to the College Registrar.
3.6 **Absentee Line Procedure**

3.6.1 If a student is absent from the school, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact the College by phone on the College Absence Line on 96340856 to notify of their child's absence from school on a particular day. After hearing the recorded message the parent/guardian is to:

- State their name and the date
- State their child's name
- State their child's Year level and House
- State the reason for their child's absence

3.6.2 Administrative Support Staff attend to the College Absence Line promptly at 8am where all calls to the College by parents/guardians, in relation to their child's absence are updated electronically by approximately 9.30am on Sentral.

3.6.3 At approximately 9.30am alert messages are sent by Student Services via text message to parents/guardians who have not contacted the College to inform them of their child's absence on a given day and that no explanation has been received by the College.

3.6.4 The Attendance Line is updated throughout the day; for parents/guardians who advise the College after 9.30am. The messages are cleared by 4.00pm in preparation for the following day.

3.6.5 Parents/guardians are not to phone the Absence Line to advise of a student's late arrival. Students arriving late to the College are to present themselves to the front desk of Student Services, with a note from their parent/guardian, advising reason for arriving late. The student's late arrival is electronically recorded, along with the time of arrival, as 'Explained Absence' (W) or in the absence of a note 'Unexplained Absence' (A) which is then followed up by the House Dean.

3.7 **Late Arrival and Early Leave**

(See Supporting Document 1 Screen Shot 3)

3.7.1 **Late Arrival Procedure**

A student who is late to the College is to report to Student Services on arrival with their ID card.

The student's ID card is swiped to give an electronic entry. In the case of no ID card, the student's name will be manually entered in Sentral.

A late note explaining the student's reason for being late is required from the parent/guardian. If there is no late note a parent/guardian can respond to the SMS or enter reason/s
Students are expected to be punctual to school and classes. Students with an unreasonable pattern of lateness will be followed up by the Dean and/or Student Coordinator through an Individual Attendance Monitoring Plan or parent/guardian interview.

3.7.2 Early Leave Procedure

Students who wish to leave the College early must report to their Dean or Student Coordinator with a note explaining the reason for early leave. The Dean or Student Coordinator signs and dates the note. The student then takes the note and signs out through Student Services who electronically enter the information on Sentral.

An email can be sent to Student Services, if a note has been forgotten or a late appointment has been made. Parents/guardians may also electronically enter the reason for early leave in the Parent Portal through Sentral.

In exceptional circumstances SMS text will be accepted if specific details are given. The SMS must contain the parent/guardian's name, contact number, student name, time of leaving and reason.

Students who are ill / injured leaving from the Health Centre or Student Services throughout the day are recorded in the attendance register in the Health Centre or at Student Services. Students who are collected by a parent/guardian are signed out via the Health Centre or Student Services and entered electronically in Sentral.

3.8 Request for Student Special Leave

Students are required to be at the College to meet syllabus requirements for achievement of outcomes and to attempt assessment tasks with their class or cohort.

Parents/guardians requesting special leave from the College for their children should note that generally leave will not be granted to students in Year 10, 11 and 12 as this impacts significantly on the equitable assessment procedures in place at the College and disadvantages the student by missing work. Parents/guardians are made aware of this expectation at the time of interview for a place at the College.

All requests for special leave must be made, in writing, to the Principal well in advance of the leave date. The College has in place an Application for Extended Leave Form. (See Supporting Document 3, Application for Leave A1. Families are encouraged to arrange holidays during the school vacation periods, which are clearly marked on the College calendar.

If special leave is granted by the Principal, the College may or may not be able to arrange any required alternate examinations or assessment tasks. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the Academic Head of any subject where an assessment is affected. As well, the student must
ask their teacher, preferably well in advance of any approved leave, for a list of work to be covered, during the absence.

It should not be an expectation that teachers will go over work that has been missed in class time due to a student’s special leave from the College.

3.9 Procedures for Absence

Parents/guardians should telephone the Absentee Line on 96340856 prior to 9:30am on the first morning of absence, if their child is unable to attend the College due to illness.

A note of explanation should be placed electronically in Sentral, using the Parent Portal by the parent/guardian on the first day their child's returns to the College from an absence. For absences of three days or more a doctors’ certificate should be provided to the College.

The Student Assessment Policies for Years 10, 11 and 12 outline procedures for students who miss school assessment tasks through absence. It is a requirement that a doctor's certificate be provided when a student in Year 10, 11 or 12 misses a formal assessment task through illness.

When truancy is suspected, a teacher will inform the relevant Dean immediately. The Dean will then contact the student's parent/guardian to ascertain the reason for the absence. If truancy is confirmed, the Dean will notify the Assistant Principal – Pastoral Care. Mandatory reporting procedures apply within the College where absences are extended or a student may be at risk.

The College notifies parents/guardians in an appropriate manner when a student has a poor record of school or class attendance. The response ranges from a phone call to parent/guardian, to an Individual Attendance Monitoring Plan to a parent/guardian interview depending on the severity of the absence issue. (See Supporting Document 1, Screen Shot 4)

Oakhill College has procedures in place to:

- monitor the daily attendance/absence of students
- identify absences from school and classes
- follow up unexplained absences
- notify parents/guardians regarding poor school and/or class attendance
- transfer unsatisfactory attendance information to student files.

A register of daily attendance is kept electronically by the school in Sentral. It monitors each student’s:

- daily attendance in each class throughout the day
- partial absences
- reason and date of absence
- late arrival and early leave from the College

The register of enrolments is retained by the College for a minimum period of five (5) years before archiving and the register of daily attendances is retained by the College for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made.
3.10 Management of Attendance Rolls

3.10.1 Procedures for recording student attendance

The College attendance records are formally recorded and maintained on a network database - Sentral.

Homeroom time is in the morning commencing at 8:35am. The Homeroom teacher takes an electronic roll in Sentral using ‘attendance.’ Names are called out and students respond accordingly.

Student absentee is evident for the Deans in Sentral.

In the situation where a student is absent and their parent/guardian has not contacted the College notifying the reason for their child’s absence, an SMS is sent. After three days of no contact the Dean should contact the parent/guardian by phone.

A record of explanation from a parent/guardian must be received on a student’s return. This explanation may be lodged in Sentral through the Parent Portal on their child’s return to the College after an absence or via a written note to the House Dean who then lodges the explanation in Sentral.

If an absence is not rectified by a parent/guardian through the Parent Portal in Sentral after five days, the Dean should contact the parent/guardian by phone.

Students who arrive at the College after 8.35am must sign in at Student Services with a note of explanation. The administration staff will enter the information electronically in Sentral. The student will then go directly to their timetabled class. (See section on Late Arrival)

From the commencement of Term 1, Year 12 students who have a study period at the end of the day (P5 or P6 on Tuesdays) may go home at lunchtime. Year 12 must complete a permission form for this privilege and be on Level 3 in the College Level System. Once the permission form is completed and signed by a parent/guardian it is collected and the information is entered on Sentral. (see Year 12 Study Periods Policy).

Parents/guardians of students with extended periods of absence or who are repeatedly late to the College or class should be notified by letter of these attendance concerns and where appropriate be called for an interview with the Dean and / or Assistant Principal of Pastoral Care.

3.10.2 Responsibilities

3.10.2.1 Students

- Attend all school days as outlined in the College calendar
- Be punctual to the College in the morning and to classes throughout the day
- Bring notes to the College to explain late arrival
• Sign in and out of office when arriving late or leaving College early (for pre-approved appointments)

• Follow procedures outlined in the Student Assessment Policies regarding illness and misadventure (Years 10, 11 and 12 students)

• Catch up any class work missed through absence

• Carry their diary when out of class with teacher permission.

3.10.2.2 Classroom teachers

• Take electronic class roll at the start of each lesson in Sentral

• Notify relevant Dean when a student develops a pattern of absence from class

• Follow College relevant policies and procedures to manage students who are repeatedly late to class

• Make entries in the Student Diary when students have need to leave a classroom

• Provide work for students to complete at home as requested by Deans, when students have extended absence from the College due to illness.

3.10.2.3 Specialist Teacher

• Teacher overseeing a specialised event e.g. sport, reflection days, retreat or excursion must enter electronically all students involved 24 hours prior to the event’s commencement

• Amendments must be made electronically to the rolls on the day of the event as required.

3.10.2.4 Parents

• Ensure that their children attend the College everyday

• Contact the Absentee Line and leave a detailed message regarding their child’s absence (See section Absentee Line)

• Explain student absences electronically in the Parent Portal of Sentral

• Write and sign a note for partial leave for appointments or lateness to the College

• Apply in writing to the Principal to request special leave for a day or longer.

3.10.2.5 Homeroom teachers

• Be punctual to homeroom – teachers and students should move promptly at 8:30am
• Electronically mark the roll in Sentral – each student’s name should be called out so that they can respond aloud

• Electronically record reasons for partial absences

• Follow-up absent students on their return

• Liaise with Deans to contact parents about student absences, particularly after three days in a row

• Electronically record and maintain an accurate record of attendance for each student;

3.10.2.6 Deans

• Monitor and manage student attendance in the House

• Contact parents/guardians for unexplained absences, particularly after three days

• Inform parents/guardians by letter and/or interview of any concerns regarding poor attendance.

• Periodically check Sentral for attendance accuracy

• Enter into Sentral hand written notes, emails or texts from parent/guardians regarding absence

• Keep a hard copy of all written notes and emails from parents/guardians on student file for seven years. SMS messages would be kept in phone records

• Provide support and assistance for homeroom teachers in managing student attendance

• Alert counsellors when students establish a pattern of high or regular absence;

3.10.2.7 Office Staff

• Maintain accurate attendance records electronically in Sentral for absentee line, lateness and early leave.

• Send SMS messages to parents of absent students by approximately 9:30am.

• Archive the attendance records at the end of each year – to be retained for 7 years.

3.10.2.8 Assistant Principal – Pastoral Care

• To work with Deans and office staff to ensure effective systems for monitoring and maintaining records of student attendance.

3.10.2.9 Principal
• Process student requests for leave
• Grant Certificate of Exemption
• Make necessary investigations and follow reporting procedures for students failing to meet the minimum attendance standards as outlined by the Education Act.

3.11 Application for Leave
(See Supporting Documents 3 and 4, A1 and A2 Attached)

The College follows the legislation introduced in 2015 that, any family holiday taken during term time will be counted as absence and that a Certificate of Exemption no longer applies to family holidays/travel taken during term time.

An Application for Extended Leave is to be lodged by a parent/guardian directly to the Principal with all relative supporting documentation.

The Application for Extended Leave must be submitted to the Principal by the parent/guardian two weeks prior the requested travel period. If the reason for requesting leave is within the requirements of the Education Act, and are in the student's best academic interests, the Principal may grant the leave.

The College will record granted leave as 'L' in Sentral and a Certificate of Extended Leave will be issued and sent to the parents/guardians.

If the principal does not grant leave the absence will be recorded as an 'A' in Sentral and the parents/guardians will be notified.

All leave documentation is kept on the student's file. In the case of Certificate of Extended leave, the original must be kept by the parents/guardians.

3.12 Application for Exemption from Attendance at School
(see Supporting Document 4, Part C)

The College processes a parent's/guardian's Application for a Certificate of Exemption from Attendance in accordance with the guidelines under Section 25 of the Act from NSW Department of Education and Communities. The College requires an Application for a Certificate of Exemption for all non-holiday related requests for leave.

Reasons a Certificate of Exemption may be granted include:

• Exceptional domestic circumstances
• Direction under section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991
• Participation in elite sport or employment in the entertainment industry
• College representation in sporting, cultural or educational event.

An Application for Exemption from School Attendance is to be logged by a parent/guardian directly to the Principal with all relative supporting documentation.
The Application for Exemption from School Attendance must be submitted to the Principal by the parent/guardian two weeks prior the requested travel period. If the reason for requesting leave is within the requirements of the *Education Act*, and are in the student’s best academic interests, the Principal may grant the leave.

When an Exemption is approved by the Principal or his delegate, a Certificate of Exemption will be issued and sent to the parent/guardian. The absence will be recorded as 'L' in Sentral.

If the Principal does not grant the exemption the absence will be recorded as an 'A' in Sentral and the parent/guardian will be notified.

A copy of all Leave/Exemption documentation is kept on the student’s file. In the case of Certificate of Exemption, the original must be kept by the parent/guardian.

### 3.13 Exemption from Enrolment
(See Supporting Documents 5 and 6, B2 and B3 Attached)

The College Principal may grant exemptions to students of compulsory school age from the requirement to be enrolled in school provided approval has been given to their entering a full time apprenticeship or traineeship before they have completed Year 10 under section 21B of the *Education Act*.

Such exemptions will only be granted to a student where:

- the Principal considers that the student is a suitable candidate to complete their education through an apprenticeship or traineeship
- the Principal has sighted a full time apprenticeship or traineeship contract signed by the employer and a summary training plan authorised by the Registered Training Organisation
- An employer agrees to notify the Department of Education and Training, through the Principal, if the apprenticeship or traineeship is abandoned before the student turns 17.
- If the student does not complete the apprenticeship or traineeship they will not have completed Year 10 and are legally required to do so under another pathway; for example, by returning to school or seeking enrolment in TAFE NSW.

### 4.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy may be varied from time to time in the event of any information that would demonstrate the need for a review, or resulting from any legislative or organisational change that would warrant a review.
5.0 **EXPLANATORY NOTES AND DEFINITIONS**

Compulsory years of schooling

From the age of six (6) to the age which a child completes Year 10 of secondary education (subject to the participation requirements of Section 21B(3) of the Education Act) or the age of seventeen (17) years whichever occurs first.

6.0 **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

6.1 Supporting Policies

6.1.1 Student Assessment Policies (Years 10, 11 and 12)
Illness / misadventure section

6.1.2 Safe School Policy

6.1.3 Student College Diary

6.2 Supporting Documents

6.2.1 Supporting Document 1, Screen Shots

6.2.2 Supporting Document 2, Student Sign-Out Form

6.2.3 Supporting Document 3, A1 Application for Extended Leave

6.2.4 Supporting Document 4, A2 Certificate of Extended Leave

6.2.5 Supporting Document 5, B1 Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

6.2.6 Supporting Document 6, B2 Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School

6.2.7 Supporting Document 7, Summary of Procedures for Tracking Student Attendance at Oakhill College

6.2.8 Supporting Document 8 A3 Letter of Decline

6.2.9 Supporting Document 9 B3 letter of Decline