



# TOONGABBIE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL LTD.

A ministry of Toongabbie Baptist Church

ABN 55 002 400 302

14 June 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you to inform you of some changes that will take place in relation to our Attendance Policy at Toongabbie Christian School.

These changes are a requirement of the BOSTES and we believe they are necessary in our duty of care of your children.

We will be introducing a SMS notification system to alert you if your child has not arrived at school and we have not received an explanation of their absence from you.

## How will this affect you?

From Monday 20 June 2016 you will need to **notify the School of any student's absence by 9:15am on the day of the absence.**

The School may be notified in any of the following ways:

- Phone 8863 2952
- Email [attendance@tcs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:attendance@tcs.nsw.edu.au)
- Send a note to the School Office

The note or email must include the student's name, class, date and explanation for your child's absence

If you do not notify the School, and your child is marked absent in Family Group/ Class, a SMS will be sent to one parent's mobile phone number by approximately 9:30am. If, after 30 minutes we have still not had a response from the SMS, the School Office will endeavour to make contact with either parent. If we still have not received a response, the matter will be referred to the Head of Stage/Assistant Principal and Principal.

A more detailed explanation of the new system is on the reverse side of this letter and we have included a notice which you can put on your fridge as a ready reminder of our phone number and email address.

If you know in advance that your child will be absent from School, the **Advance Notice of Student Absence** and **Application for Certificate of Exemption from Attendance** forms are available on the School website by clicking on the 'Absence/Late' icon. Please see our website and overleaf for more information about these forms. You are also welcome to speak with Mrs Debbie Kelly in the School Office if you require any clarification on this.

We realise that any new process will experience some "teething problems" but we believe this is a necessary step for the School to ensure the safety and welfare of your child and to exercise the School's duty of care. We appreciate your patience as we implement this new process.

Yours sincerely

Dr Johan Griesel  
Principal

## 1. For student absences

Parent/carers must notify the School of their child's absence by 9:15am on the day of the absence in one the following ways:

- Phone **8863 2952**
- Email **[attendance@tcs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:attendance@tcs.nsw.edu.au)**
- Send a note to the School Office.

The note or email must include the student's name, class, date and explanation for the absence.

## 2. For student absences known in advance\*

Please use the **Advance Notice of Student Absence** form (available at [www.tcs.nsw.edu.au](http://www.tcs.nsw.edu.au) or the School Office), for reasons such as:

- Misadventure
- Participation in special events not related to the School (eg family wedding interstate)
- Domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- Attending a funeral
- Travel in Australia and overseas

\* **If any of the above notifications exceed 5 school days** parents/carers will be required to provide additional information, eg letter outlining the absence, copies of air tickets, travel program etc.

The **Advance Notice of Student Absence form** is available at [www.tcs.nsw.edu.au/Absence](http://www.tcs.nsw.edu.au/Absence)

## 3. To apply for a Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School

Parent/carers are required by the Government (Department of Education & Training) to apply for a **Certificate of Exemption of Attendance** at school where an exemption is sought from the legal requirement to attend School. Exemptions from attendance at school may be granted for:

- Exceptional circumstance (such as a lengthy health issue of the student). Please note: this provision excludes aspects mentioned in Item 2 above.
- Student employment in the entertainment industry (eg elite arts program)
- Student participation in elite sporting events (including for short periods of time [1 or 2 days] and at short notice)
- A student being prevented from attending school because of a direction under section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991.

The **Application for Certificate of Exemption from Attendance** form is available at [www.tcs.nsw.edu.au/Absence](http://www.tcs.nsw.edu.au/Absence)

## 4. For students who are absent without a reason

If a student is marked absent without a reason, an automated SMS will be sent from our Student Services Officer to one parent/carer. The SMS will read:

**XXXX [first name] XXXX [family name] is recorded as absent today (dd/mm) without notification. Please contact the School on 8863 2952 to explain the absence ASAP – Toongabbie Christian School**

If the student remains unaccounted for by 10:00am, the School will phone the emergency contacts listed by parent/carers.

## 5. For students who are late to School

Please remember to provide an explanation by 9:15am the next day.