



Student Attendance Policy

Policy Review

This Policy was approved on 1st March 2017 and will be reviewed at least every two years. The next due date for review is therefore 1st March 2019. Where any material change is deemed appropriate to be made to this Policy, it may be amended and submitted for review and approval at an earlier date.

School Attendance Policy

Rationale:

Regular attendance at school is vital in order for students to achieve their potential and increase their knowledge, abilities and skills. Rissalah College and the parents are responsible for regular attendance of students and the school is required to keep attendance records of all students enrolled.

Aims:

- Under the *Education Act*, Rissalah College is required to ensure that students meet certain attendance standards. This includes mandatory attendance for students under 17 years of age unless exemptions are applicable.
- Parents and staff at Rissalah College work in partnership to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance
- To have open communication on student attendance
- To provide parents and teachers with effective strategies to promote regular attendance

Implementation:

1. The Principal will ensure that all attendance records are recorded on Sentral and the daily Attendance Report is completed by midday each day.
2. All students that are enrolled are recorded in the Register of Admission and all details of the students are entered in SchoolWrite by the Administration Manager.
3. Each morning the class teachers complete the daily attendance on Sentral immediately after the morning assembly (8:40am).
4. When a student is absent, the Administration Assistant will follow up on a daily courtesy call to the parents to enquire about the child's absence. This will commence from approximately 11:30am.
5. Interpreters will be provided to communicate with parents from language backgrounds other than English in matters relating to school attendance.
6. The parents are also required to provide a written explanation for student absence as soon as the student returns to school.
7. If an explanation is not received within seven days, the Administration Assistant will record the absence as unjustified (code A). However, should an explanation be provided after this time, it will be entered on Sentral with the required code.
8. Class teachers will telephone and meet with parents to address attendance concerns and the missing out on their regular school programs.
9. Daily roll checks will clearly expose early identification of students at risk of developing poor school attendance.
10. Parents will be notified through the newsletters and our school website about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
11. Child protection concerns regarding school attendance, including educational neglect, will be addressed in accordance with the Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.
12. Where there are concerns about suspected risk of harm, the principal will contact the Home School Liaison Officer from the Campsie NSW Police Force.
13. Staff and class teachers will provide a caring environment for all students and provide students with learning activities that encourage a love for learning.

14. The class teachers, the administration assistants and the administration manager will maintain accurate records of student attendance.
15. They will inform the principal of poor attendance or/and when no explanation is provided for the absence within 7 days.
16. When the child returns to school after an absence and has no letter, the teacher will provide the student with an Absentee Notice immediately.
17. When the student is constantly late or constantly leaves early, the teacher will ensure that the student complete a letter concerning *Partial Absence*.
18. Parents will be contacted via telephone or direct contact before or after school to ensure that the letters are returned as soon as possible.
19. Where the child is frequently absent due to illness, the class teacher and principal need to consult with the parents and discuss the health care needs of the child.
20. The principal will request a medical certificate.
21. If the request is denied or the principal is not satisfied with the explanation, the absence can be recorded as A (unexplained or unjustified).
22. Meetings with parents will be held if the attendance continues to be irregular. At the meeting, the benefits of regular schooling will be the main issue of discussion and developing a plan to improve attendance.
23. If several steps have been taken and there has been no improvement in attendance, the principal will contact the Home School Liaison Officer for further support.

Record Keeping

1. The school attendance records must include:
 - a. a *Register of Admission* to be kept permanently
 - b. an Attendance Register (roll) to record absences via *Sentral*
 - c. Each class teacher also completes the *Daily Attendance Slips* to confirm daily attendance and sends these to the office by 11: 30am
 - d. all letters, records of verbal explanations, records of electronic explanations about absences from parents are stored in the Yellow Absenteeism Folder located in the office of the Administration Manager.
 - e. letters of absences will be kept until seven years after the student has left
2. The administration assistants will complete the *Daily Attendance Report* by midday each day and send to the Principal.
3. NESAs requires that student records should be kept for six years after the student has turned 18 years of age.
4. The administration assistants will use the codes approved by the Minister of Education.
5. Students who have left the school during the year must be indicated on *Sentral* and be removed from *SchoolWrite* by the Administration Manager. The Administration Manager must first ensure all the required forms have been completed and signed and all school fees have been settled before removing the names.
6. When students arrive late or leave early, the times of arrival and departures will be recorded by the Administration Assistant with the relevant attendance codes.

Attendance Codes

1. Only the following attendance register codes must be used to record the
 - explanation of absence and /or
 - variation in student attendance

Attendance Register Codes to use for explanation of student absence:

Symbol	Meaning
a	The student was absent on that day.
Pa	The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal. It is up to the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as a result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a medical certificate is provided or • the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation.
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which the principal has accepted. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misadventure or unforeseen event • participation in special events not related to the school • domestic necessity such as a serious illness of an immediate family member • attendance at funerals • travel in Australia and overseas • recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions
E	The student was suspended from school

Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance. These are not counted as an absence for statistical purposes:

Symbol	Meaning
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by the principal
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external tutorial centres • programs that are school authorised
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school sport (regional and state carnivals)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● school excursions ● student exchange
H	<p>The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis.</p> <p>The symbols recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *tutorial centre and programs *behaviour schools <p>Note: Independent schools use “F” not “H” for students attending external tutorial centres and programs that are school authorised.</p>

2. When an error is made in an electronic attendance register, an amendment should be made within 7 days of the absence

3. Copies of the information written in the register of admission should be stored off-site at regular intervals. Sentral is a student management software system used at Rissalah to complete our daily attendance registers.

Exemptions from Attendance at School

Certificates of Exemption from the compulsory schooling requirements of the Education Act (1990) will only be granted by the principal when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student’s best interest in the short and long term and that alternatives to exemption have been considered. Parents need to submit the application for exemption from enrolment and supporting documentation to the school principal before the proposed period of exemption. A Certificate of Exemption should not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with a child protection report to Family and Community Services and /or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm. Prior to granting a Certificate of Exemption, a risk assessment should be completed to identify and manage risks.

If parents request authority not to enrol their child, this must be considered an application for exemption from enrolment. Circumstances for exemption from enrolment could include a delayed start to school, health, learning or social disadvantage. The principal will consider applications for recommendation and will send applications to the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation, for further referral to the Minister’s delegate in NSW Department of Education.

Where there is a case of exemption from enrolment for completion of education under special circumstance, the principal will consider the application for recommendation and will mail the appropriate NESAs form (Application to complete education under special circumstances (other than an apprenticeship or traineeship) to NESAs at the address noted on the form.

Applications for Extended Leave (travel or holiday)

From the beginning of 2015, family holidays and travel are no longer considered under the [Exemption from School - Procedures](#). Travel outside of vacation period is now counted as an absence for statistical purposes.

An Application of Extended Leave should 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.

The principal should not accept a reason for travel during school term if it is not in the best interests of the student. Educational, social and participation reasons should be specified on the application.

Travel is considered to be domestic or international travel for the purpose of a family holiday, family business, bereavement or other reasons, which should be specified on the application.

The principal should consult with parents about the intention of the travel and in the case of family holidays, encourage parents to take holidays with their child during school vacation periods.

Where the principal considers that the travel is appropriate during school term, the principal should issue the parent with an *Application for Extended Leave* for completion and inform the parent that if the application is accepted, the absences will be recorded as "L" – Leave.

The principal should request travel documentation, such as travel itinerary or e- ticket, and ensure this is attached to the application.

The principal should ensure that parents are assisted with the completion of the application and provide a translation service if required.

The principal may decline to accept a parent's Application for Extended Leave, especially if the leave is longer than five days. In this case the parents will be called to a meeting and will be advised of the reasons for this decline and that the absence will be recorded on their attendance record.

If a student or students do not return on the date specified, the principal must ensure the parents are contacted to establish the whereabouts of the student. If contact is not established, then the principal should follow processes associated with an Application for Home School Liaison Program support.

On accepting a parent's application, a *Certificate of Extended Leave* must be issued. The original certificate is provided to the parent and a copy of the certificate placed in each student's record.

Students who have left Rissalah College during the year:

Students are removed from the attendance register by having their enrolment status changed in SchoolWrite, Sentral and the Attendance Register. Students must not have their enrolment status changed unless one of the following circumstances applies:

- a.
 - i. the form *Parent Confirmation of Withdrawal* was completed and signed by the parent
 - ii. that the student is enrolled in a government or other registered non- government school. The Principal must sign the *Parent Confirmation of Withdrawal* form.
 - iii. Rissalah College will request that the parent provide the name of the non- government or other government school so that the new enrolment can be confirmed.

- iv. the status of the student should not be changed in the attendance register or Sentral until confirmation of enrolment is received from the enrolling school.
 - v. in cases where confirmation has not been received, take all reasonable measures to attempt to confirm enrolment details. Measures can include contacting the school provided by the parent, making appropriate contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit if there are concerns for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the student, or reporting to the Child Protection Helpline if there is significant risk of harm concerns.
 - vi. Written confirmation provided to the school by the parent including a Registration Number from NESAs, which indicates the student, has been registered for home schooling.
- b. The administration manager will advise the administration assistant and the class teacher about the withdrawal of the student by completing the *Notice of Withdrawal* form once the student's registration at the new school is verified.
- c. A student who has been expelled from the school in accordance with [Rissalah Suspension and Expulsion of School Student – Procedures](#): The student's enrolment status should not be changed on SchoolWrite or Sentral until issues regarding the student's educational placement have been resolved and the new enrolment confirmed.

When students are believed to have left the school and their destination is unknown

Some students may not be attending school because they may have moved or enrolled elsewhere, and their parents have not notified the school. In some cases, the student may not have enrolled in another school.

Prior to the student's name being removed from SchoolWrite and Sentral, a number of actions need to be confirmed by the principal.

Where the student is of compulsory school age and has been marked as 'absent' for periods exceeding a total of 5 consecutive school days, where the school is open for instruction, and is believed to have left the school, the school should:

- contact the parent to seek an explanation
- contact the emergency contact recorded for the child in the enrolment form
- investigate the student's enrolment/registration status on the enrolment forms
- contact the School Liaison Officer for assistance
- contact government and non-government schools within a reasonable radius of any presumed new residential address
- write a registered letter to the parents, requesting the required information and for the parents to contact the school as soon as possible

Where the school is unable to determine the location of a student following its investigation, the school should submit an Application for Home School Liaison Program Support to their local Educational Services Teams. The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) will investigate the matter.

If, on investigation the enrolment destination cannot be determined, the HSLO will advise the principal that the student's registration can be changed to 'Left – Destination Unknown'.

In changing the student's enrolment status to 'Left – Destination Unknown' the principal must ensure:

- any risk of significant harm issues including educational neglect have been reported to the Child Protection Helpline
- where the family or student is missing (or their destination is unknown) and there are concerns for their safety, welfare or wellbeing, a report is made within 24 hours to the Safety and Security Directorate to determine if the matter has been reported to the Police. Where no report is made, the principal is to report the matter to their Local Police.
- the School Board is informed that following investigation by the Home School Liaison Program the student is unable to be located and their enrolment status has been changed to 'Left – Destination Unknown'
- If a student is later located the school is able to change the status on the attendance registration to 'Left – Located'.

If a student's name has been removed from the attendance register because 'their enrolment destination is unknown', absences from the last day of attendance at school are not included as absences for statistical purposes. The Attendance Register (roll) should be amended to reflect this.

What is the role of the NSW Police Force?

Police officers are authorised as attendance officers under Section 122 of the Education Act 1990.

During school hours, an authorised attendance officer or police officer may approach a student who appears to be of compulsory school age and who is not in attendance at school.

On presentation of their authorisation card the attendance officer may request the student's name, home address and the name and address of the student's school. They may approach a student who is accompanied by an adult.

A police officer, or authorised attendance officer in the company of a police officer, may accompany the student to his or her home or to the school to verify the information provided.

Under this authorisation, police have no power of arrest, detention or physical restraint.

23. Definitions

Parent: Includes a carer or other person having the care or custody of a child or young person.

Unexplained absence: A student absence where a parent provides no acceptable reason for a student's non-attendance.

Truancy: The absence of a student from school without the knowledge or permission of their parent or carer.

Parent condoned absence: When a parent or carer causes a student to be absent from school without acceptable reason.

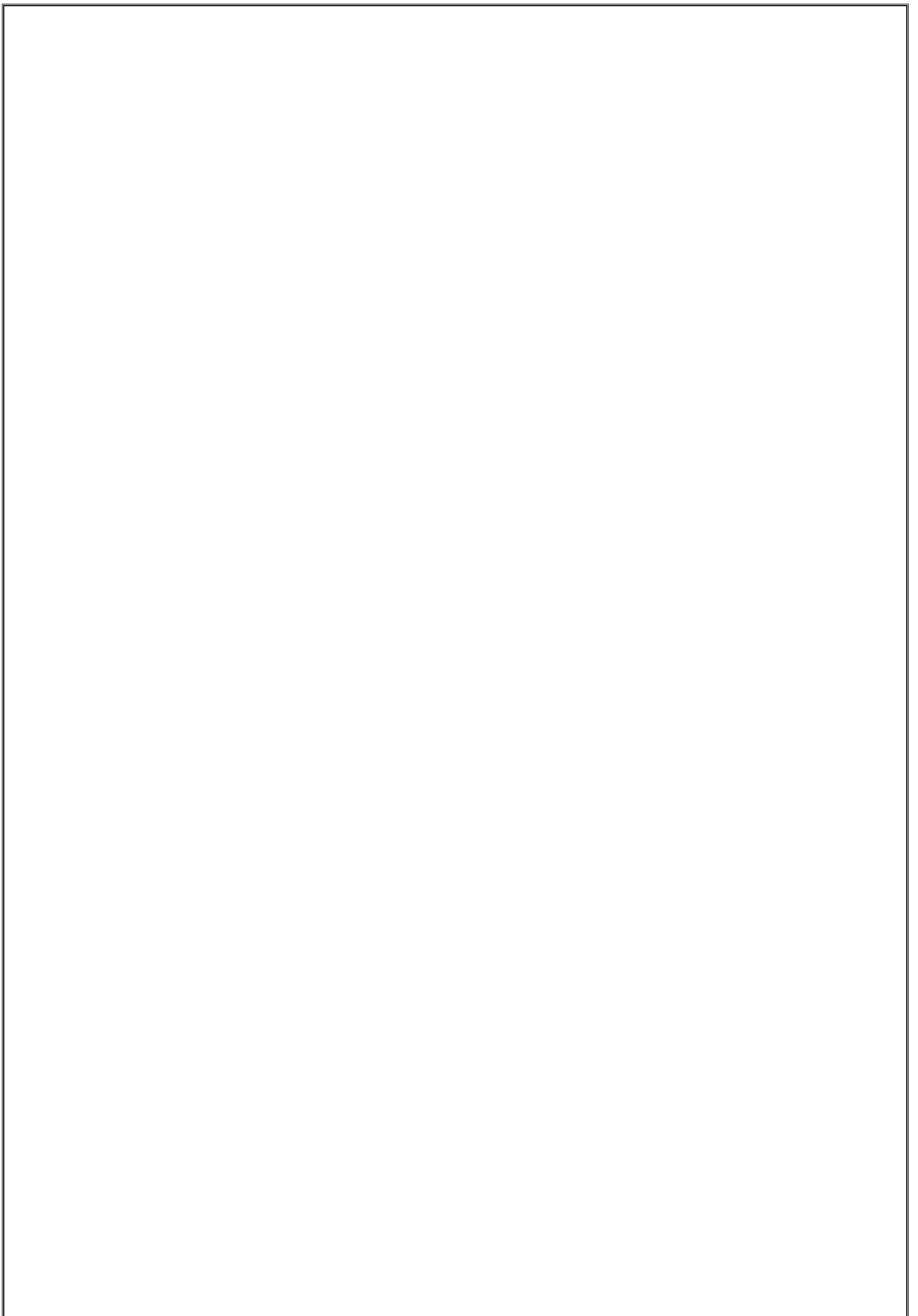
Explained/justified absence: A parent has provided an explanation of the student's absence, which has been accepted by the principal.

Explained/unjustified absence: A parent has provided an explanation of the student's absence, which has not been accepted by the principal.

Unexplained/unjustified absence: A parent has not provided an explanation of the student's absence within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.

Resources to Support the Regular Attendance of Students at School.

- Information on the NESA website.
- [Every Student, Every School](#) is an initiative providing better learning and support for students with a disability, additional learning or behaviour support needs in schools. Addressing the learning and support needs of students with a disability strongly supports regular attendance at school.
- [SCSEEC Successful School Attendance Strategies](#) evidence-based project from the Australian Government – Australian Institute of Health and Wealth: this booklet contains authoritative information and statistics to promote better health and wellbeing for communities
- Attendance Register Codes: Association of Independent Schools (AIS)
- [Compulsory School Attendance – Information for other government and non-government agencies and organisations](#)



RISSALAH COLLEGE DAILY ATTENDANCE REPORT

Class	Teacher	Sentral Daily Roll Submitted ✓ / x	Student Absences - List FULL names of students	All absent students contacted via phone call and reason for absence ascertained ✓ / x (Where contact was unable to be made – note this down here)
K Blue	Ms. Najjarine	✓	Jabir Quazi	✓
K Green	Ms. Hassan	✓	NIL	NIL
K Red	Mrs. Small/El-Mowafy	✓	Ayah AlJaroudi, Zakariah Matar	✓
1 Blue	Miss Trinh	✓	NIL	NIL
1 Green	Ms. Samman	✓	NIL	NIL
1 Red	Miss Zaylah	✓	Aisha Dewan, Farishta Kabir, Jude Abou- Maraseh	✓
2 Blue	Ms. Schumacher	✓	Ideheem Hasanat	✓
2 Green	Mrs. Patel	✓	Alya Dakramanji	✓
2 Red	Ms. Davino	✓	Roukaya Kleit, Samara Matar	✓
3 Blue	Ms. W.Lozi	✓	Adam El Zok, Wafi Quazi	✓
3 Green	Mrs. Alameddine	✓	Rashied Doar, Aakifah Ahmed	✓
3 Red	Ms. Baluch	✓	Izzat Matar	✓
4 Blue	Miss Najjarine	✓	Ammar Bin Akter	✓
4 Green	Ms. Malak	✓	NIL	NIL

4 Red	Ms. Raziq	✓	Sadia Haydar	✓
5 Blue	Mrs. Allazze	✓	Aisha Mahmoud, Mohomed Abdallah	✓
5 Green	Ms A Tabbaa/N Tabbaa	✓	Jad Youssef	✓
6 Blue	Mr. El-Hallak	✓	NIL	NIL
6 Green	Ms. Hamouda	✓	NIL	NIL
6 Red	Ms. S.Lozi	✓	NIL	NIL

	<i>PRINT NAME</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
Report completed by:	Naglaa Abdelfattah	N.A
Report checked by:	Hajar Nesirwan	H.N



IMPORTANT Information for parents

As part of recent national changes, holidays taken by students outside of the normal school holiday period will now be included as absences. All families are encouraged to holiday or travel during **school holiday periods ONLY**. If travel during school term is necessary, it is subject to Principal approval. This may risk your child's enrolment at Rissalah College.

Application for Extended Leave

NOTE: PART A is to be **completed by the student's parent** and returned to the Deputy Principal.

PART A: STUDENT DETAILS

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

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	SRN

Student address: _____

Postcode: _____

Dates of extended leave applied for: From: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Number of school days: _____

Reason for travel: _____

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 (if applicable)

Date of prior exemption/extended leave: From: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Number of school days: _____

Copy of Certification of Exemption/Extended Leave attached (Please tick Yes No

PART C: PARENT DETAILS (Applicant)

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-Vacation/ 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-Vacation/ 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* may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.

Signature of parent/s: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

PART D: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL AND PRINCIPAL

I recommend that this *Application for Extended Leave* be accepted:

(Please tick one box):

Yes No

Notes for principal:

Deputy Principal's name (please print): _____

Signature of Deputy Principal: _____ Date: __/__/__

I accept this *Application for Extended Leave*

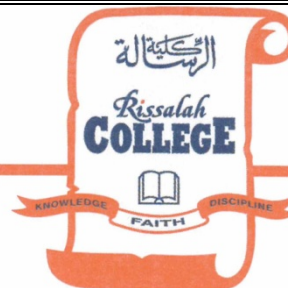
(Please tick one box):

Yes No

Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's name (please print): _____ Telephone number: _____

Signature of principal: _____ Date: __/__/__



Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

To be completed by the student's parents:

Student Details

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Age: _____ Date of birth: ____ (dd) / ____ (mm) / ____ (year)

Enrolment Registration Number (ERN): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

School name: _____

Date of exemption applied for: ____ / ____ / ____ to: ____ / ____ / ____

Number of school days: _____

Reason for application for exemption:

Please tick:

Exceptional domestic circumstances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Exceptional Circumstance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction under Section 42D of the <i>Public Health Act 1991</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment in entertainment industry/participation in elite sporting event for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 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 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 exemption may result in the exemption being revoked.

Signature of applicant/s: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

To be completed by the principal of the school where the exemption period requested exceeds 100 school days and forwarded to the delegate responsible for approval

Prior to forwarding this application for exemption from attendance at school to the delegate responsible for issuing the Certificate of Exemption (See page 4, *Guidelines for Exemption from School*), the principal should complete the following advice for the delegate.

I recommend that this application from attendance at school is (Please tick one box):

Granted

Not granted

Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's name (please print): _____

Telephone number: _____

Signature of principal: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____



PARENT CONFIRMATION OF WITHDRAWAL

We wish to officially inform you that our child _____
of class _____ will no longer be attending Rissalah College.

Reason for withdrawal:

Last day of attendance at Rissalah College: _____

Name of school child will be attending: _____

Notes/Comments: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____



NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

To: _____
Class: _____
From: Principal Signed: _____
Date: _____
Re: _____

Please note that _____ will be absent from school from
_____ until _____ .

This leave is: Approved
 Unapproved

Please use _____ code in your class roll.



Certificate of Extended Leave – Travel

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

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.

Details of Students

Details of all students of this family associated with the period of travel:

Family Name	Given Name	DOB	Age	Grade	Student Number

Home Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Name of School: Rissalah College

Telephone Number of School: (02) 9758 0808

Dates of extended leave: From ____ / ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ / ____

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 their children's supervision during the provided period of extended leave.

The parent/s understand that the period of Extended Leave is limited to the period indicated and acknowledges that the provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed.

Name of Principal: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

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