



Independent Student Status Policy

Rationale

The Independent Student Status Policy is informed by the College Mission statement and the values of compassion, social justice and individuality as outlined in Strategic Directions 2010-2015. While St Patrick's College acknowledges that support of family is significant in achieving positive student outcomes, it also recognises the need to provide support for students living separately and independently from parents/guardians.

This policy provides clear, supportive structures and processes that will enable Independent Students to continue their education with minimal disruption to their learning and assist staff in their management of Independent Students by providing understandings of student rights, responsibilities and communication processes.

Definition of an Independent Student

Parent/guardian contribution is required for a range of circumstances throughout a student's education at St Patrick's College. In circumstances where a student is aged **fifteen years or over** and is living separately and independently from parents/guardians however, this may be inappropriate or difficult to obtain.

The Principal or delegate can determine if a student is to be considered independent by:

- establishing the student is living separately and independently from parents/guardians **and**
- has been assessed as independent by Centrelink and is 16 years or over **or**
- has been assessed by Centrelink as eligible to receive Special Benefit.

Following the initial assessment, an *Independent Student Status Form* is required to be completed in order for the student to be recognised as independent.

Independent Students and College Processes

An Independent Student is expected to follow the same College expectations and procedures as dependent students however, Independent Students are able to:

- vary enrolment details and update required information on their student record.
- enter into agreements with the College about such things as school fees, the purchase of educational and College material including textbooks and stationery and the payment for required curriculum options and camps/excursions.

- provide consent for participation and medical treatment associated with outdoor education activities including camps and excursions, without requiring the consent of parents/guardians.
- write their own notes for excursions and College activities.
- advise the school/nominated staff member in advance of expected absence to attend appointments if they fall during school hours, with provision of evidence of appointments (i.e. appointment card).
- keep the College informed of their current address and emergency contact person.

Absences must be deemed reasonable and necessary considering the individual student's circumstances and should be supported by evidence if more than two days (i.e. Medical Certificate). Independent students must be made aware Centrelink will confirm attendance and multiple unapproved absence can incur Centrelink payment penalties.

To ensure the safety, effective management and support of students, St Patrick's College requires Independent Students to nominate a responsible adult who can be contacted and relied upon to act in their best interest. Where discipline and/or welfare issues arise, the nominated responsible adult must act in support of the student and liaise on their behalf with the College.

Privacy and Confidentiality

St Patrick's College is bound by the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act. Once a student is accepted as Independent by the Principal then consent and rights of access to the personal information of that student are governed by the National Privacy Principles and are managed according to the Privacy Policy outlined in the Staff Handbook - Policies.

Due to the student's changed circumstances, parents do not have an automatic right to access information in regards to their child and requests of this nature should be directed to the Principal.

Approved by:	Principal / Board
Issuing Group:	Wellbeing / Leadership Team
Implementation Date:	18 July 2016
Supersedes Policy Dated:	2013
Revision Date:	June 2019
Contact Officer:	Deputy Principal - Pastoral Care