



St Patrick's Catholic School

Attendance Policy



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Responsible Person	Rodney Linhart
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Related Documents	



Attendance Policy

RATIONALE

- The *Education Act (1994)* requires that children of school age (six-fifteen years) resident are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Education Department.

AIMS

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult.
- Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.
- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence, shopping excursions or birthday parties are not.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a further responsibility to contact the school before 9.30am explaining why an absence has occurred.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school daily.
- All student absences are to be recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers.
- The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office may seek student attendance records.
- The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained. (See Truancy policy)
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student mid and end of year reports.

Enrolment and Attendance Procedures

The education Act 1994 states that:

- A child who is at least 6 years of age as at the 1st January in any year must be enrolled at a school (or be provided with home education) for that year and subsequent years until the child attains the age of 16 years unless exempted or excused under this Part.

A parent of a school age child must:-

- (a) enrol the child in a school appropriate to the child's education needs, or
 - (b) be registered as a home educator in respect of that child.
- A parent is to enrol a school-aged child at a school by lodging a completed application with the Principal.
 - An application for enrolment of a school-aged child is to include information relating to:
 - (a) the identity of the child
 - (b) the identity of the parent of the child
 - (c) the place of residence of the child
 - (d) any other matter in respect of enrolment that is required.



- If requested by the Principal, a parent wishing to enrol a school-aged child is to provide evidence of:
 - (a) the age of the child
 - (b) the parent's guardianship, care or control of the child.
- A parent/guardian of a school-aged child must ensure that the child attends school each day as required.
- A school-aged child who is not provided with home education is to attend school during the whole of a school day unless exempted or excused under this Part.

To maintain accurate records of attendance at St Patrick's School the Principal shall ensure that all entries in the Admission Register for the school are completed. In this register, the following data shall be recorded for each student upon enrolment:

- the gender of the student
- the register number
- the date of admission to the school
- the name of the student
- the religious denomination of the student
- the date of birth of the student
- the name of the parent or guardian
- the address where the student resides
- the school the student last attended
- the grade for each year the student attends Sacred Heart School
- the student's name is also recorded in the alphabetical index.

When a student leaves the school the following information is recorded in the Admission Register:

- The month and the year the student left.
- The reason for leaving, which should indicate the school to which the child has transferred or any other reason for leaving.

When a student is readmitted, the name is to be re-entered under the proper date and is re-indexed under the new number.

Daily attendance is recorded by class teachers in individual attendance registers for each class. The names of students and the days of attendance are recorded. Student absences are then recorded on the daily absentee form which is forwarded to the office by 9.30am each day. Individual student absences are recorded in the Student attendance file in Filemaker. This data is available to staff and TCEO / Education Department when required and is used for reporting to parents.

For new enrolments and school leavers during the year, date of admission or the date on which a student has left is indicated similarly in Filemaker.

The Education Act 1994 also states:

- A school-aged child is excused from attendance at school on any day if:
 - (a) The child is prevented from attending because of:
 - (i) sickness
 - (ii) temporary physical or mental incapacity
 - (iii) any other reasonable cause
 - (b) The parent of the child has notified the Principal within 5 days of the start of non-attendance.
- If the child's non-attendance at school because of sickness and incapacity extends beyond 5 days, a parent of the child, at the request of the Principal, is to provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner.



The Principal may require a student not to attend school during any day on which the student has an infestation or is suffering from any disease which, on advice from the Director of Public Health, may be infectious, contagious or harmful to the health of any other person at the school.

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school, except in the situation outlined in this attendance policy and procedures document. The Principal has a responsibility to follow-up unexplained absences for students enrolled at St Patrick's School.

If the Principal believes that a child may have an infectious illness or infestation, he/she should contact the child's parents and ask for the child not to attend school. Parents should be aware that the Principal has the right to require that a student not attend school if the Principal believes that the child has an infectious disease or infestation.

If a student is absent from the school, parents are asked to contact the school office before 9.30am to indicate the reason for the student's absence and the possible length of the absence. The classroom teacher is informed, and absences are recorded in the class register.

If the school is not informed by parents of student absences the School Secretary will telephone parents to check on students' whereabouts. Teachers are to monitor regular absences and to inform the Principal of continued absences. The Principal will follow-up their absences. (see Truancy policy)

A follow-up note from parents is requested when a student returns to school after an absence. A written note from parents is requested if students are to be collected from school by someone other than the student's parent (s).

Early departure / Late arrivals

Each morning the class teacher will mark absences. If an absence is unexplained, office staff will ring parents prior to 9.30am. The guardian/parent of students who depart early sign the students out at the office. Students who arrive late are also signed in by the guardian/parent at the office. This is also recorded in Filemaker.

Parental role:

In the event of a student's absence, parents are asked:

- To notify teachers in advance, if their child is going on holidays, appointments, etc.

OR

- To send a note with a sibling if the student is sick. Any teacher receiving a note concerning an absent sibling should forward the note to the appropriate class teacher.

OR

- Ring the school office and leave a message. This message will be passed on to the classroom teacher.

On return to school, students **MUST** present a written explanation from parents. Teachers must keep a copy of all notes received together with their class registers.



Exemption from attendance

The Education Act allows for application for exemption from full-time attendances at school for particular reasons.

Generally exemptions can be sought under section 7 of the Act

- (i) for a student to leave school before the age of 16 OR
- (ii) for a student to attend school part-time OR
- (iii) can be sought for a limited period of time e.g. travel overseas.

In the case of (i) and (ii) the request for exemption should include:

- (a) what the student plans to do.
- (b) the school's position re this.
- (c) the parent's position especially if parental support is required for the student to put his/her plans into effect.
- (d) any other information which can demonstrate that an exemption is in the best educational interests of the student e.g. supporting documentation from a medical practitioner.

In the case of (iii) where the exemption is sought for a set period of time that period must be specified – the beginning and ending dates – and any information in support of the request.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Implemented:	May 2013
Reviewed:	August 2013
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