



## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY / PROCEDURES**

In Victoria, education is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 16. When children are enrolled at St Mary's Catholic Primary, it is expected they will attend school or school activities, every day of each term. It is also expected that teachers will monitor this attendance by completing the online roll twice a day.

The roll is a legal document that must be maintained in an appropriate way should it be required for legal reasons at a later date.

### **PURPOSE**

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, the everyday administration of student attendance requires the school community's support through pastoral care, high quality teaching, community contact, organisational skills and a general vigilance toward students' educational and emotional well-being.

Providing a supportive school environment, one that offers a curriculum and approaches to learning and teaching to facilitate the success of all students, will enhance student attendance. The effectiveness of attendance record keeping and the resultant prompt follow-up of absences through a close liaison with parents/guardians and the school, will encourage consistent attendance by students.

### **ATTENDANCE GUIDELINE / PRINCIPLES:**

- \* Student's absence from school means that learning opportunities are reduced and this can ultimately lead to poorer student achievement. Where this happens, the impact will be felt long after the student has left school.
- \* Absence from school and class clearly affects the absent student, but also impacts on the teacher's ability to plan and present class work in a sequential and organised way. This can affect the progress of all students in the class, not only those missing, and can make classroom management difficult.
- \* School attendance helps children develop social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communications skills and healthy self-worth.
- \* The systematic monitoring of student attendance and the degree to which schools are able to address the absence issue is an important indicator of a school's ability to maximise the learning opportunities it offers to its students.

\* Parental support for attendance programs is vital. It is necessary for schools and parents to develop a partnership in their approach to student attendance that highlights both the school's and the parents' responsibilities in this area.

\* St. Mary's staff and parents must be aware of student absences. In the case of unexplained absences, principals should ensure that there is prompt communication with parents/guardians.

\* St Mary's clearly conveys to parents that it is their obligation to inform the school of the reason for a student's absence. Parents also need to be aware of the processes used by the school in following up student absences.

\* Parents at St Mary's are required to notify the school of any absence. Where there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a student, prompt communication should occur with the parents/guardians.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE ROLL**

\* Records of student attendance are required for all students enrolled at the school because of the need to: monitor the legal requirement for students under sixteen years to attend school discharge schools' duty of care for all students including those over the compulsory school age supply accurate information for audit purposes.

\* Parents are required to notify the school of a child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence by ringing the school office or by using the Skoolbag App.

\* The attendance roll is a permanent record of the attendance of all students.

\* Class teachers will mark the attendance roll at 9:30am and 2:00pm each day.

\* A code to record meaning of student absences will be utilized by teachers as noted on the school **nForma Roll**.

<b>S</b>	Sick
<b>F</b>	Family
<b>D</b>	Dentist
<b>Dr</b>	Doctor
<b>A</b>	Appointment
<b>EL</b>	Early Leaver
<b>L</b>	Late arrival
<b>U</b>	Unknown

\* For "**Unknown Absences**" school administration will contact parents before 10.00am to ascertain the nature of the absence. This is done to ensure that parents and St Mary's School are alert to the safe arrival of children to school each day.

\* Attendance and absence records will form part of each child's half year and end of year reports to parents.

\* Parents of absent students are required to provide a written note, detailing the reason/s for absence. These notes are to be retained in each student's personal file.

\* Staff members are to bring to the attention of the Principal any student/s whose attendance is irregular, any students who do not provide written notes adequately explaining absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.

\* The Principal will, after consulting with the class teacher, attendance records and the student, decide upon a strategy to be employed. As truancy is often indicative of other problems including engagement and family issues, the support strategies employed by the Principal will be determined on a case-by-case basis. However, they may include:

- Initial telephone contact with parents
- Counseling sessions for parents and/or students
- Home visits
- Formation of a Student Support Group and an Individual Learning Plan
- School attendance as a prerequisite to extra-curricular activities
- Attendance rewards

\* Ongoing truancy issues will be reported by the Principal to the appropriate welfare and government agencies.

\* Rolls will be maintained using an electronic version for maintaining the roll.

Reviewed: Feb. 2018

Ratified:

Date of next review: