



# St Michael's School Bassendean

## Attendance Policy

Revised: 2019

Due for Review: 2023

### Attendance Policy

#### **Rationale**

In Catholic education, Christ is the foundation. All members of the St. Michael's School community are committed to providing each child with the desire and opportunity to reach his/her highest potential: spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically, in an environment which reflects strong Christian values.

Regular attendance at school is fundamental to student learning. Low school attendance has been linked with many negative outcomes for students. Persistent non-attendance requires additional resources to re-engage students in schooling and to catch up on missed learning. Truancy can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.

The School Education Act 1999 requires compulsory aged students to attend school or participate in an educational program of a school. Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. Principals are to record/monitor student attendance, and use strategies to restore attendance if needed. St Michael's Primary School monitors and manages student attendance in order to maximise the opportunities of all students to learn.

#### **Definitions**

##### **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

An absence where the reason provided by the parent is considered to be legitimate and deemed acceptable by the principal.

##### **PARENT**

In relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child.

##### **STUDENTS WHOSE WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN (SWU) LIST**

A list, usually referred to as the SWU List, containing the names of children who are missing from schools and educational programs in Western Australia, is distributed by the Department to administrators in non-government schools and some other agencies by agreement.

#### **Principles**

The Principal will:

- ensure accurate records are kept for every student enrolled at the school including at both morning and afternoon sessions including Kindergarten and Pre-primary students.
- ensure a student's absence was authorized or unauthorized.
- ensure all attendance records are maintained and archived by the school.

The school will:

- request a reason for a student's absence be provided to the principal's satisfaction.
- investigate when a student's attendance is below 90%.
- Organize a parent/teacher meeting at the earliest opportunity to identify issues concerning the student's absence; plan improvement strategies; and include identified attendance improvement strategies in a documented plan.



# St Michael's School Bassendean

## Procedures

Classroom teachers are required to mark morning and afternoon rolls using the Catholic Education of Western Australia's preferred method in a timely fashion.

Morning roll to be marked no later than 9:00am

Afternoon roll to be marked no later than 1:45pm

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school prior to the commencement of the school day if their child will be absent from school. Parents can notify the school using one of the following methods:

- An email sent to [admin@stmichaelsbass.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@stmichaelsbass.wa.edu.au) and the classroom teacher.
- A telephone call directly to the school.
- Verbally advising the teacher or the front office.
- A signed note sent to the school by a parent.
- Completing the relevant form at the school.
- Using the absentee form on the Connected app.

Any verbal method must be followed up by written notification. This can include a note or email from a parent outlining the date(s) the student was absent, the reason for the absence and full name of the parent. Parents are also able to use the absentee form on the Connected App.

Administration staff check Absentee phone line messages and adjust status of absent children whose parents have phoned in (e.g. "unresolved" 8:30am – 3:00pm if child is away for full day sick).

Once all class morning rolls have been marked, administrative staff send out an absentee SMS to relevant parents/guardians, and adjust child's attendance status accordingly when parents phone the school (e.g. change status from absent to "unresolved" absence), usually by about 9:30am.

If parents/guardians do not respond to absentee SMS, administrative staff are to endeavour to contact parents by phone.

If students arrive after 8:40am, they will be deemed as late and will need to sign-in at the office. They will receive a Late Card to hand to the teacher. Entries into Kiosk are updated automatically. If the sign-in book is used, administration staff will adjust student details.

Students arriving after 9am will need to be processed through the office online or via the sign-in book with a reason for being absent. If the sign-in book is used, the Administration staff will adjust student details online.

For a planned absence which is not of a medical nature (eg. family holidays) parents must complete a form to obtain permission for the absence from the principal. Once parents have the permission of the principal, administrative staff will adjust student details as an "approved absence" for the dates provided. If the period of absence is expected to exceed a few days, specialist teachers are also informed. Ultimately, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child/ren participate in the academic program at the school. When parents choose for their child to not attend, the academic program will not be duplicated by the school ie. teachers are not expected to provide alternative work for students to complete while on holiday.

Absentee follow up letters are printed out fortnightly and sent home via class teachers. Parents are required to provide a written explanation for the child's absence or complete the absentee form on the Connected App. Class teachers are required to adjust the child's attendance status as each absence is resolved.



# St Michael's School Bassendean

If the student is absent from school and an acceptable written explanation has been provided by the parent, teachers are to adjust the child's attendance status and no further action is required.

When a parent completes an absentee form on the Connected App, administration staff will print the form out and mark it as entered. The notes will then be given to class teachers to file.

Class teachers file all attendance notes until the end of the year. At the end of the year, they place all attendance letters in an A4 envelope and label with year, class and teacher name and give to Administration staff to be placed in the Archive Room.

Attendance notes received from parents are archived until 25 years has passed from the child's date of birth.

The Assistant Principal, at least once a term, will evaluate attendance registers have been completed and absences resolved. The Principal will be advised of teachers not maintaining their register.

Teachers must inform the relevant Assistant Principal when a student's attendance falls below 80%. The Assistant Principal will investigate the reasons for the absence and send home an attendance note. The Assistant Principal will monitor attendance. Should the attendance not improve, a further meeting will be organised between the Principal and the parent.

Relief teachers will mark attendance on the class list available in the relief folder and send with a student to the office by 9am. They will mark the attendance on the same sheet after lunch and send with a student to the office by 1:45pm.

When a student is absent and unable to be located for 15 days, the Assistant Principal will prepare a "student whose whereabouts is unknown" form to be submitted by the Principal.

**Reviewed**

**2017**

**2019**

**Next Review**

**2023**