

Attendance Procedures

Revised: 2022

Due for Review: 2023



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 School monitors and manages student attendance in order to maximise the opportunities of all students to learn.

To access the full curriculum, and give children the best chance of success, Catholic Education WA recommends the rate of 90% - 100% 'Regular Attendance'. When attendance falls below this level it indicates a student may be at risk of not reaching their full potential. The chart below summarises the impact of low attendance on student learning.

| Period of Absence (Years 1 – 10) | Rate of Attendance | Equivalent School Missed | Level of Educational Risk |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Average of 5 days per Term | 90% | 1 year | Classified as regular attendance |
| 1 day per week | 80% | 2 years | Indicated At-Risk |
| 1.5 days per week | 70% | 3 years | Moderate Risk |
| 2 days per week | 60% | 4 years | Moderate Risk |
| 3 days per week | 50% | 5 years | Severe Risk |
| 5 days per week | 40% | 6 years | Severe Risk |

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 for both morning and afternoon sessions including Kindergarten students
- ensure a student's absence was authorised or unauthorised
- 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%
- organise 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.

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 attendance@stmichaelsbass.wa.edu.au.
- Using the [online absentee form](#) on the school website
- 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.

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.

Every morning administration staff check the absentee email messages and adjust status of absent children.

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 advise the school either verbally (unresolved) or via email/online form (resolved).

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 using the Kiosk iPad. They will receive a Late Card to hand to the teacher. Entries into Kiosk are updated automatically.

For a planned absence (e.g. family holidays) parents must complete a Leave of Absence 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 emailed to parents fortnightly. Parents are required to provide a written explanation for the child’s absence. Administration staff will adjust the child’s attendance status as each absence is resolved.

Written attendance notes are scanned and saved in the student’s personnel file. Electronic attendance notes (eg those emailed or received via the online attendance form) are saved and archived each year within the email program. Student records are currently subject to a disposal freeze and therefore this information is retained indefinitely.

The enrolments officer will run the incomplete roll report every fortnight and notify teachers. 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 rate is below 90%. 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

2022

Next Review

2023

