



St Peter Chanel  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **RATIONALE**

The *Education Act 1994* requires that resident children of school-age (five to sixteen) 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 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 explaining why an absence has occurred. If a student is absent and no explanation has been provided by 10am, a staff member will phone home to check on the student.
- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are to be recorded in the morning by teachers.
- The 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 end of year reports.

## **Enrolment and Attendance Procedures**

The *Education Act 1994* states that:

- A child who is at least 5 years of age as at the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

School Principals are to:

- Adhere to the Enrolment Policy and associated procedures and guidelines.
- Maintain an official record of attendance for each enrolled student. This must include any off-site provision.
- Ensure that all part-time attendance arrangements for students are formally documented, stored and reviewed.
- Ensure any intervention processes due to non-attendance are documented and that the appropriate documents are used.
- Seek support from and work with other agencies and support services in accordance with agreements where students' attendance patterns become irregular.

Teachers are to:

- Comply with these procedures and associated policy.

School Social Workers are to:

- Investigate applications for part-time attendance and liaise with government agencies as required.
- Assist in cases of non-attendance.

Parents are to:

- Ensure that their child attends school each day as required by the principal.
- Notify the school when the child will be absent because of illness, incapacity or other cause.

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- Provide a certificate from a medical practitioner if requested by the principal, if the child's non-attendance due to illness extends beyond five consecutive days
- Follow the directions of the principal in relation to attendance associated with communicable diseases or infestation.

#### **Student Admission Register**

To maintain accurate records of attendance at St Peter Chanel 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 St Peter Chanel 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 re-admitted, 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 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 Peter Chanel School.

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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 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. 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).

### **Attendance Procedures**

#### Teacher's role:

The class teacher records student absences daily on a class attendance register. Using the key on the right side of the register, teachers note the absence with their A- for an unknown Absence, K – for a known absence or S – if they have been notified as sick. Once this has been completed, it is to be sent to the office by 9.00am for processing.

*Appendix 1. Example of Absentee List (attached)*

#### Administration role:

Once receiving the absentee register, office staff to enter the absentee into the student records database. This program allows us to record all relevant details of the student absence. If notes explaining student absence are attached to the register, once the relevant information has been entered into the data base, these should be filed in the relevant student files.

If no note is present and a student is marked with an 'A' – for an unknown absence, administration staff will make a follow up phone call.

The register is a legal document and should be kept clean and tidy at all times.

### **General Instructions**

- The Principal is required to see that the registers and records of the school are neatly kept and fully and accurately posted. The Principal must also ensure that an adequate check is kept on unsatisfactory attendance.
- The names must be written by alphabetical and grade order and in classes.
- All columns in the Attendance Register shall be fully posted and dates shall be inserted where necessary.

### **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

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- (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.

**Withdrawal from school**

The school must receive in writing the following:

- the withdrawal of the child from the school; and
- the proposed education of the child after that withdrawal

**EVALUATION**

Date	May, 2014
Version No.	1
Responsible Person	Gregg Sharman
Approved by	
Review Date	2017
Related Documents	This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's policy review cycle. <b>Implemented:</b> February 2010



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### Appendix 2. Infectious Diseases

The following diseases are presently deemed to be infectious, contagious or potentially harmful to the health of other people in a school. The minimum periods that a sufferer should not attend school are indicated. These recommended periods are a guide which may be modified in individual cases. Further advice can be obtained from the Director of Public Health.

Chicken Pox	Should not attend for 5 days after the first eruption appears (scabs remaining after this time are not an indication of a need for continued exclusion)
Conjunctivitis	Should not attend until eye discharge stops
Diarrhoea	Should not attend until condition stops
Diphtheria	Should not attend until medical certificate of recovery issued after at least 2 negative throat swabs
Glandular Fever	May attend school
Hepatitis A	Should not attend until medical certificate of recovery
Hepatitis B	May attend school
Hepatitis C	May attend school
HIV	May attend school
School Sores	Should not attend until sores on exposed surfaces have been treated and are covered with a dressing
Leprosy	Should not attend until health authority authorises return
Measles	Should not attend for at least 5 days from appearance of rash
Meningitis (Bacterial)	Should not attend until well
Meningococcal Infection	Should not attend until well
Mumps	Should not attend for at least 9 days after onset of symptoms
Pediculosis (Lice)	Should not attend until day after treatment has started
Poliomyelitis	Should not attend for at least 14 days from onset and readmit on medical certificate of recovery

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Ringworm	Should not attend until day after treatment has started
Rubella (German Measles)	Should not attend until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash
Scabies	Should not attend until day after treatment has started
Streptococcal Infection (including Scarlet Fever)	Should not attend for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment and the student feels well
Trachoma	Should not attend until day after treatment has started
Tuberculosis	Should not attend until production of medical certificate
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever	Should not attend until production of medical certificate
Whooping Cough	Should not attend for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.