

SACRED HEART PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Number:		Version Number:	4
Approval by:	Education Board	Responsible Officers:	Education Board
Approval Date:	April 2019	Revision Date:	March 2023

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectation for children's attendance at Sacred Heart Parish Primary School.

In Victoria, education is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 17. When children are enrolled, it is expected they will attend school every day of each term.

It is important that children and students develop habits of regular attendance at an early age, from the time they are enrolled in a pre-school.

Students who regularly miss days of school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic building blocks in subjects, and may experience long term difficulties with their learning.

School attendance helps children develop social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communications skills and healthy self-esteem.

State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), January 2018.

The aims of this policy are:

- To acknowledge the importance of regular attendance at school to the educational and social development and progress of students at Sacred Heart.
- To regularly monitor the attendance and time of arrival of all students.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Sacred Heart Parish Primary School.

Attendance data will be reviewed as per the Federal Government requirements and published in the school newsletter. Attendance patterns will be evaluated with improvement/lack of improvement noted and followed up.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this Policy:

School Community	is broadly defined as those who have an interest in or are affected by the business of Sacred Heart Parish Primary School and the way it operates and may include: parents/guardians, students (pupils), teachers, support staff, Catholic Education Office and parishioners.
Principal	means the Spiritual and Educational Leader of a Primary School.
Education Board	means the members of the Board as defined in the Terms of Reference updated in March 2019 and includes ex-officio members, nominated members and elected representatives.
Sacred Heart Parish Primary School	means a catholic school registered by the Registered Schools Board as a primary school and includes those schools so registered where classes are held for years up to but not beyond Year Eight.
Parish (Sacred Heart Parish)	in the Roman Catholic Church, each parish has at least one parish priest, who has responsibility and canonical authority over the parish.
School Administrator	has the responsibility for maintaining all student records and being the resource person for the students, parents and visitors.

4. SACRED HEART PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

5.1 It is the Sacred Heart Parish Primary School policy that

School Procedures:

- Teachers mark the electronic attendance roll twice daily;
- Students are to arrive at school by 8.40 for the first bell;
- Explanations of absence are recorded by the School Administrator and the classroom teacher on the electronic roll;

- Students who arrive at school after the second bell at 8.45 collect a late pass at the school office and late arrival is recorded directly on to the electronic roll;
- Information regarding the importance of regular attendance is included in the school newsletter;
- Individual attendance will be included in school reports;
- Classroom programs are used to reinforce to children the importance of attending school and being on time
- Learning Diversity Officer or Principal contacts parents when absences are frequent and/or unexplained.

Absences and Late Arrivals:

- The school requires parents/guardians to provide an explanation of their child's absence; this can be verbal, written or by phone call to the school office on the day of absence;
- The School Administrator will make contact with parents if students are absent for any unexplained absence the parent will be sent an SMS by 9:30 via the Informa program. The School Administrator will notify the Learning Diversity Officer who will determine whether further follow-up is required;
- Classroom teachers or the School Administrator will advise the Learning Diversity Officer of frequent absences or late arrival/early departure patterns. The Learning Diversity Officer in consultation with the Principal determines appropriate follow-up;
- Students absent for more than 10 days within a term with no explanation or notes that do not satisfactorily explain absences will be contacted by the school secretary on subsequent days of absence;
- Electronic roll reports will be used to identify students with 80% or less attendance at the end of each term. Parents of those students will be contacted by the Principal; and
- Follow up contact may include a letter of concern or a phone call or referral to an appropriate agency.