



St. Mary's Primary School Batlow

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE POLICY

A STATEMENT OF AGREED PRACTICE

RATIONALE

- The staff of St Mary's Primary School is responsible for ensuring that all students who are of school age and are enrolled at St Mary's Primary School attend on a regular basis.
- It is compulsory in NSW, according to NSW Act for all students between the ages of 6 and 15 to attend school.

AIM

To provide guidelines for the staff of St Mary's Primary School to ensure that the attendance of students is monitored and absences are followed up.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

1. NSW Education Act 1990

- **22 Compulsory [schooling](#)**

It is the duty of the [parent](#) of a child of or above the age of 6 and below the age of 15 to

cause the child:

(a) to be enrolled at a [government school](#) or [registered non-government school](#) and to attend the [school](#) at all times when the [school](#) is open for the child's instruction or participation in [school](#) activities

- **23 Offence to fail to send child to [school](#)**

(1) The [parent](#) of a child of or above the age of 6 and below the age of 15 is guilty of an offence if the [parent](#):

(a) fails to cause the child to be enrolled at a [government school](#) or [registered non-government school](#) or to be registered for [home schooling](#), or

(b) fails to cause the child to attend any such [school](#) at all times when the [school](#) is open for the child's instruction or participation in [school](#) activities or to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the child's registration for [home schooling](#) is subject.

PROCEDURES

- All class teachers will mark students' attendance and absences in the class roll.
- All class teachers will mark partial attendance or absence in the class roll.
- Parents are instructed to notify the school when a student will be absent.
- On return to school the parents will send a written explanation for the student's absence.
- On the second day of an unexplained student absence the class teacher/school administration person/Principal will make an attempt to phone the parents/carer and ascertain the validity of the absence.
- Reasonable excuses for student absence include
 - illness, including recovery from major illness, injury or medical condition
 - medical or dental treatment
 - bereavement
 - religious or cultural observation
 - family holidays or extended visits overseas
 - attendance at a wedding or other important family celebration
 - attendance at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with hearings
 - participation in sanctioned debates, eisteddfods, sports, musical or theatrical productions not directly arranged by the school
 - participation in territory, interstate, national, or international sporting event or equivalent
 - sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families.
- Teachers who are concerned about the number or type of student absences, will report their concerns to the Principal
- The Principal will follow up and take appropriate action i.e. Report to DoCS.
- When a student is regularly absent from school for valid reasons ie music tuition, but it is impacting on their learning, the Principal will liaise with the parents and negotiate a more suitable time.
- Families who know they are going to be away for an extended period of time ie family holiday, should contact the class teacher and request work for the student to complete in their absence. The teacher should be given a week's notice.
- The Principal will collect class rolls at the end of each term, check absences and relevant parent explanation notes, and ask teachers to follow up if absences and notes do not tally.
- An 'Absence Proforma' is available for teachers to send home to parents when students have returned to school without a written explanation
- To remind parents of their obligations regarding attendance the Principal will place on the Newsletter at the beginning of each school year a reminder of parental obligations, attendance laws and the disadvantages of students missing school.
- When students have legitimate reasons for being absent, the class teacher will make every effort to help the students to catch up on missed work and activities.

Attendance Policy

St Mary's Primary School Attendance Policy is aligned to the Canberra Goulburn Catholic Education Office Policy "*Attendance at Schools (NSW)*" Jan 2013.

Procedures

- Class teachers record daily absences in a class roll according to guidelines at the commencement of each school day.
- Parents are encouraged to provide a written explanation of a student's absence.
- If a written explanation is not forthcoming within two weeks of the student's return to school, the class teacher issues a formal reminder.
- The Principal reviews all class rolls at the end of each term.
- The Principal will contact parents or guardians if records indicate a non-compliance with Compulsory School Attendance Legislation.
- The Principal and school staff will endeavour to assist families who may be experiencing difficulty with regulation compliance.

Absence

Any absence is to be explained in writing, upon the child's return. No child is allowed to leave the school grounds without written notification. Parents are required to sign a register located in the front office before taking the student during school hours.

Exemptions for Student Attendance

When parents plan to exclude their children from school for reasons other than sickness or unforeseen events i.e. funerals, the parent or caregiver is required to complete an Application for Student Exemption form. A certificate of exemption will then be issued. Forms are available from the school office.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in 2016.

