

# St Brigid's Catholic School Wynyard



## Attendance Policy

### **RATIONALE**

The *Tasmanian Education Act* requires that children of school age (six-fifteen years) and resident 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 an 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 children are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a further responsibility to provide a written note to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.

- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are to be recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by admin staff.
- Student absence records are printed on the last day of each month to monitor and highlight regular absenteeism so this can be followed up with parents if necessary.
- 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 TCEC)
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student reports.

## **EVALUATION**

Reviewed in school review cycle or as needed.

2010

2013

Next Review: 2016

## **Enrolment and Attendance Procedures**

The Tasmanian Education Act 1994 states that:

- A child who is at least 6 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 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.

To maintain accurate records of attendance at St Brigid's Catholic School, the Principal shall ensure that all entries in the Admission Register for the school are completed.

Daily absences are recorded by class teachers in the Absence Record Sheet/Folder. Office staff record all absences to the data base.

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 Brigid's School.

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 telephone the school office before 9:15 am 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 Attendance Folder.

If the school is not informed by parents of student absences, the School Admin Officer will telephone parents to check on student's whereabouts after 9:15 am Teachers are to monitor regular absences and to inform the Principal of continued absences. The Principal will follow-up their absences. (Truancy Policy TCEC)

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).

## **EVALUATION**

Reviewed in school review cycle or as needed.

2010

2013

Next Review: 2016

## **Attendance Procedures: Absentee Folder**

Each day the class teacher will mark absences in biro in the class folder. The folder should be completed in the morning. Any notes received from parents/guardians concerning absences should be kept together with the folder. If you are aware of the reason for absence, this should also be noted. This folder should be sent to the office as soon as possible – but no later than 9.15 am. If a student, who has been marked as absent, arrives late to school, it is imperative that the child comes to the Office and receives a 'LATE PASS', which shows teachers the office staff are aware the child has arrived. If a child comes to class without a Late Pass, teachers are to ask the parent or child to report to the office and to return with a Late Pass.

### *Parental role:*

In the event of a student's absence, parents are asked:

- To notify teachers in advance, if their child is going on holidays, appointments, etc.

**OR**

- To send a note with a sibling if the student is sick. Any teacher receiving a note concerning an absent sibling should forward the note to the appropriate class teacher.

**OR**

- Ring the school office and leave a message. This message will be passed on to the classroom teacher.

On return to school, students should present a written explanation from parents. Teachers must keep a copy of all notes received.

### **Procedures For Early Departures**

If parents are collecting children from school before the dismissal bell at 3:00pm they will need to sign the student out in the book that is kept in the office. An office staff member will then collect the student from the classroom. A parent is not to collect students from a classroom.

### **EVALUATION**

Reviewed in school review cycle or as needed.

2010

2013

2015

Next Review: 2018