



# Whitford Catholic Primary School

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Review: 2017

### RATIONALE

The Education Act mandates that all children of primary age attend school. Other things being equal, time spent on school tasks is the single biggest factor in learning success. Parents are encouraged not to allow students to miss school unnecessarily as most instruction is sequential and lost lessons may be difficult for children to make up.

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

### 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.

### PRINCIPLES

- Whitford Catholic Primary School will
  - keep accurate attendance records for every student enrolled at the school that are able to be reproduced in a written form
  - record whether a student's absence was authorised or unauthorised
  - record a student as:
    - present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours of instruction
    - present if they are on a school-approved activity or attending off-site
  - retain attendance records in accordance with the School Education Regulations 2000 and the Retention and Disposal Schedule for Department of Education School, College and Campus Records
  - retain documentation of all contact and intervention strategies implemented in addressing a student's absence.
  - include the attendance data of every student enrolled in response to requests for school attendance data (for example, participation in the Attendance Data Collection).
  - request a reason for a student's absence be provided to the Principal's satisfaction



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## PROCEDURES

### RECORDING ATTENDANCE

1. Classrooms open at 8.30am with classes starting at 8.45am. Students should be in their class by the 8.45am bell.
2. Students arriving after 8.45am must sign in the Late Register in the office and take a Pass to the class teacher. If students arrive late to class without a Pass, teachers should send the student back to the office to sign in.
3. Teachers will mark students absent or present by 9.00am on SEQTA. Teachers will also mark the roll when class recommences after lunch.
4. Parents are asked to notify the school if their child will be absent via the Absentee Line (9404 4244) or Absentee email (absentee@wcps.wa.edu.au) by 9.00am. If verbal notification has been given, either directly or on the Absentee Line, this must be followed by written notification, via note or email, on the child's return to school.
5. Parents planning an extended absence from school (e.g. holiday) are required to send in a written explanation to the Principal via email at absentee@wcps.wa.edu.au, before departure - a month in advance if possible.
6. Notified absences are recorded on SEQTA by the Administration Officer.
7. The Administration Officer will send an SMS message to the parents of students who are absent without notification before 10.00am. If parents do not respond to the SMS message, the Administration Officer will follow-up with a phone call directly to the parents.
8. Every month, the Administration Officer will send a follow-up email to the parents of all students who have been absent without notification or have not submitted written notification of their absence.
9. At the start of each term, the Administration Officer will send a follow-up letter to the parents of all students who have been absent without notification or have not submitted written notification of their absence for the previous term.

### PERSISTENT NON-ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

1. When a student's attendance is below 90% or is identified as a concern, the class teacher will contact the parents to investigate the reasons for the student's absence and/or help develop and implement strategies for improved attendance.
2. If student attendance does not improve to a point where it is no longer a concern, a formal meeting with the parents will be requested by the Cluster Leader and/or Social Worker.
3. The Principal will document all intervention strategies used to address a student's absence, so that, should it become necessary to proceed to prosecution, it can be clearly established that all reasonably practicable steps to restore attendance have been taken.
4. Where persistent absence persists, the Principal will contact the School Attendance Officer at the Department of Education's North Metropolitan Regional Office.