

# SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

## **Rationale:**

- The *Education Act* requires that children of school age (six to seventeen years) resident in Victoria 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 Regional Director.

## **Aims:**

To promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- Articulating high expectations to all members of the school community in relation to students attending school every day of the school year for the full duration of each school day
- Adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absence
- Following up student absences promptly and consistently
- Creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success.
- Promotion of awareness that absence results in quantifiable lost learning time and opportunities
- Regular discussion of student attendance data at different meeting times

## **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 provide a written note or return a completed absence form (See Form 1 below) 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 recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our school database.
- The Department of Education and enrolment auditors 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 Form 2 below).
- The principal will ensure parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences are contacted, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.
- Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance may result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported to the Department of Human Services.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

## **Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

October 2016

This policy was last ratified by the staff and school leadership team.