

Student Attendance Policy

Commitment to Child Safety

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe all of the time. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance for child abuse. At Sacred Heart we strive to maintain a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. We are committed to continually reviewing our Child Safe policies and practices to ensure that every effort is made for ongoing improvement of our Child Safe environment.

We at Sacred Heart recognise that some groups of children are particularly vulnerable and we are committed to promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal/linguistically diverse children and also promoting the safety of children with a disability.

Source of Obligation

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 4 cl 10) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.6) require that we must make provisions to:

- monitor the daily attendance of each student enrolled at the School; and
- identify any absences of a student from School including classes; and
- follow up any unexplained absences of a student from the School or classes; and
- notify any parent or guardian regarding a student's unsatisfactory school or class attendance; and
- record information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes on their student file.

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 4 cl 11) (CECV Guidelines ref 2.4) require that we must maintain a student attendance register recording the attendance of students of compulsory school age (i.e. 6-17 years). An attendance register records any unexplained absences to ensure:

- the care, safety and welfare of students
- continuity of learning.

An attendance register must record student attendance at least twice a day and record any given or apparent reason for student absences.

Daily Attendance Register

Sacred Heart keeps a register of the daily attendance of all students at the School in electronic form via SiMON. The register of daily attendance records the following information for each student:

- daily attendance
- absences

- reason for absence
- documentation to substantiate reason for absence.

Attendance is checked at least twice a day, at:

- 9:00am (roll mark)
- 2:20pm (roll mark)

Monitoring Daily Attendance

Sacred Heart has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and identify absences from school or class:

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that they notify the School to explain the absence of their children on any particular school day. Notification may be provided via email, telephoning the School or via the Sacred Heart School App and should be made prior to the start of school.
- Class teachers take the class roll promptly at the commencement of the school day and the conclusion of lunch break.
- All absences are recorded absences using SiMON. They are then cross checked against the absentee notifications that have been provided to the School that day via email, phone or school app and against late to school passes.
- Where students are participating in courses provided by other providers, class teachers contact providers at the commencement and end of the day to ensure student attendance has been monitored by the provider.

It is the responsibility of the Administration Officer to ensure that student daily attendance is being effectively monitored.

Following Up Unexplained Student Absences

Sacred Heart has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to follow up unexplained absences from school:

- Where an absence has not been explained by 9:30am an SMS Text message is forwarded to the student's parents notifying them of the absence and requesting that they immediately contact the School. This notification is made on the same day, as soon as practicable.
- Where an absence has not been explained by 10.30am, attempts will be made to call the parents/guardians and emergency contacts to confirm the location of the child.
- Where the absence remains unexplained the matter will be reported to the Principal for investigation and follow up.
- All information in relation to unsatisfactory attendance is recorded on students' files and information with respect to attendance is provided in each student's school report.
- The requirement to follow up unexplained absences is included in the role descriptions of identified staff.

Notification of Parents and Guardians of Unsatisfactory Attendance

Sacred Heart has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to notify parents and guardians of unsatisfactory attendance:

- Where a student is unsatisfactorily absent from Sacred Heart School, the School will contact the parents directly to seek an explanation and to remind parents of their child's obligation to attend school.
- Where parents repeatedly fail to inform the School of absences the Principal will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report absences.

Parents and carers are regularly reminded to ensure that any changes to their contact details are communicated to the School.

Records of the Register of Daily Attendance

The register is retained indefinitely and copies of information in the register are stored off-site at regular intervals. The register is kept for each calendar year, and shows the twice-daily attendance checks and any reasons for absence.

School Attendance Guidelines

Sacred Heart has referenced the information in the Student Attendance Guidelines in relation to the development of this policy.

Implementation

Sacred Heart has set up a series of compliance tasks in CompliSpace Assurance, to ensure that key obligations under the Victorian Registration Standards and CECV Guidelines are managed effectively.

Related Policies

Student Non-Attendance Policy

Last Review: March 2020