



## St Mary's School MERREDIN

# ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES and PROCEDURES

### Rationale

Consistent, accurate and correct recording of student attendance is a legal requirement for teachers in schools in Western Australia. St Mary's School monitors and manages student attendance on a regular basis in order to ensure students are attending school consistently to maximize the opportunity for all students to learn.

### Definitions

Accepted forms – The following methods of non-attendance reasoning will be accepted by St Mary's School, Merredin.

- a.) An email sent to the school office email address [admin@stmarysmerredin.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@stmarysmerredin.wa.edu.au)
- b.) A Skoolbag Absentee Notification – with signature.
- c.) An email sent to the classroom teacher's CEWA email address.
- d.) A note sent to school, signed by a parent or guardian.
- e.) Direct contact from a parent or guardian: however, this must be followed up with a note signed by a parent or guardian, or an email.

All absentee communication (including notes and emails) from parents or guardians must include the following details:

1. The name of the student
2. The class of the student
3. The reason for the absence
4. The full name of the parent or guardian at the end of the message

### Procedures

At St Mary's School, attendance is managed using Catholic Education WA's system-wide preferred method - SEQTA software.

Attendance records are taken by classroom teachers at 8.40am (to record the morning session) and 1:15pm (to record the afternoon session). Attendance is marked in half day allotments.

An accepted form of resolved non-attendance must be provided to the school by the child's parent or guardian.

#### Arriving Late/Leaving Early

Students who arrive late to school (after 8:40am), or leave early (before 3:05pm), must be processed through the front office – this is done by parents/guardians 'signing in/out' their child using the iPad located in the office. The software used on the iPad generates an electronic notification which transfers to SEQTA attendance.

#### Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers have the responsibility of completing attendance on SEQTA at two different times of each school day (8.40am and 1:15pm). Office staff or specialist teachers may take responsibility for completing this task when a teacher is absent themselves, or if classes have a specialist subject at the prescribed time the attendance register is taken.

Teachers are required to follow up with parents or guardians on the reasons for student absence according to the 'Accepted Forms' outlined in the Definitions section above. The inability to provide a suitable reason for absence must be noted for future reference and accountability of the teacher.

Teachers are able to resolve absences once contact has been made by a parent or legal guardian. A signed note or email (containing all of the criteria listed in 'Accepted Forms' in the Definitions section above) will be collected by the classroom teacher and kept in an electronic file until the end of each year, when all absentee emails/notes will be archived.

#### Relief Teacher Responsibilities

Hard copies of each class list are available for relief teachers in the 'Relief Files' located in classrooms. A class list from this file is to be used to manually record absences and sent to the office by 8.40am. This list is processed through the front office and recorded on SEQTA immediately, then returned to the class for the relief teacher to provide the afternoon attendance information, following the same procedure.

#### Attendance Officer Responsibilities

At St Mary's School, the office staff act as the Attendance Officers. Any information received by the front office regarding a student's absence will be communicated to teachers as it is received, either in person, via email, or in the form of a written note.

Attendance officers will monitor the completion of the attendance roll for the two-time periods during each day. Contact will be made with classes who have not complied with the school's requirements.

#### St Mary's School Non-Attendance Procedures

- Non-resolved absences monitored and then followed up by classroom teacher.
- Absentee follow-up letters (available through SEQTA) or emails are sent to parents fortnightly to ensure teachers stay up-to-date with attendance records.
- If there is no reason for student absence on any given day, an SMS is sent by the administration officer to parents, notifying them that their child has an unexplained

absence for that day. If no response is received within a reasonable time-frame, a telephone call is made to the parent/guardian as a follow-up.

- If the class teacher/attendance officer notices a pattern of absence for any student, then the Leadership Team is notified.
- The Leadership Team will make contact with the parents or guardians of students who have an attendance rate of less than 90% to request a reason for the low attendance rate.

### **Related Information**

The following information regarding Attendance can be found in the St Mary's School Staff Handbook:

**ATTENDANCE:** Teachers are required to maintain accurate and up-to-date attendance records for the students in their class. Attendance records are legal documents and can be used as evidence in legal proceedings. Attendance is recorded on SEQTA twice daily. At 8.40am and immediately after lunch (1:15pm). Attendance Officer will contact parents for unexplained absences with a phone call or SMS. All student absences require written notification (in hard copy or email form) from the parents for the reason of absence. Notification from parents MUST include the following criteria:

1. The name of the student
2. The class of the student
3. The reason for the absence
4. The full name of the parent or guardian at the end of the message

All emails and hard-copy notes (scanned to teacher's email) are to be filed by the classroom teacher. If a parent does not send in an absentee note of their own volition, the classroom teacher is to follow this up with them and ensure that a note has been received.

Once an absentee note/email has been received, the classroom teacher is to add it to SEQTA by entering the relevant details. All absences must be resolved. A phone call to explain absence must be followed up with a written note/email.

If a teacher knows a student will be away, but has not yet entered in the reason for the absence, they may put a double x next to the child's name in SEQTA as this notifies the administration officer that though the absence is not yet resolved in SEQTA, the reason for the absence is known and a follow-up is not required.

All absentee notes will be archived at the end of each year.

Consistent and repeated absences are to be reported to the Leadership Team.

### **Source of Authority:**

Executive Directive – Safety Wellbeing and Behaviour

