



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## **Rationale:**

At Cana Catholic Primary School, we believe that student success is determined by good attendance at school. Students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from their schooling. Regular attendance enables students to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Student attendance is dependent on a supportive school environment, a curriculum that provides for all students and structures, and approaches that facilitate the success of all students.

We acknowledge that monitoring of student attendance enables identification of students at risk and the early implementation of intervention strategies.

We also acknowledge our obligation to monitor the legal requirement for all students under fifteen years to attend school, and that we have a duty of care for all students. School staff should set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

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## **Aim:**

- At Cana our aim is to maximize student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly and without unnecessary absences.
- To ensure that all members of staff are informed of the correct procedures and that there is consistency in the recording of student attendance and that the roll is an accurate record of attendance.

## **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 and therefore 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.
- 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 communicate with the school explaining why an absence has occurred using the Cana App or phoning the school.
- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are recorded on the electronic attendance and the Administrative staff are to re-enter it onto nForma roll daily.
- Staff are asked to inform the Principal if a student is away for more than 2 days.
- The Class Teacher and Principal have a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained absences, with a view to developing a plan to return to school and implementing strategies to minimize absences.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance may result in a formal conference being organized. Unresolved attendance issues may be referred to D.H.H.S.
- “IT’S NOT OK TO BE AWAY” will be promoted on a regular basis

- Student absences will be noted on the formal school report – Semester 1&2.
- The emergency teacher folder contains copies of the class list and relevant information relating to student's wellbeing i.e. medical information.
- The emergency teacher sends a manual roll to the office to be updated on nForma.
- Students arriving late to school must report to the office to collect a 'Late Pass' and they will be marked as Late Arrival on nForma.

### **Recording attendance**

Cana Catholic Primary School must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Cana Catholic Primary School's duty of care for all students

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

### **Recording absences**

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Cana Catholic Primary School of absences by:

- contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence
- informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence
- contacting the school through the Cana App or email

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Cana Catholic Primary School will notify parents by telephone at 10am, (or as close as practical) if office staff cannot get in contact with the parent or guardian to inform the Principal immediately. Cana Catholic Primary School will attempt to contact parents at 10am or as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent due to incorrect contact details or the parent not responding to the call, the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Cana Catholic Primary School will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Cana Catholic Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked with the correct Code accordingly .

### **Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement**

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, Cana Catholic Primary School will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Education Plan

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

### **Referral to School Attendance Officer**

If Cana Catholic Primary School decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines, report the concern through to the child and family services system, or refer to the School Attendance Officer.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- A. the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:  
the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences; and
- B. measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful
- C. the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
- D. the student has been absent for 10 consecutive school days; or
- E. no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

**This policy was last reviewed in 2019.**