



St Joseph's School, Waroona

Attendance Policy

Last updated:

2019

Next review:

2022

Rationale

The School Education Act 1999 requires all enrolled students to attend school or participate in an educational program of the school. Teachers are required to record and monitor daily student attendance and Principals are required to develop appropriate strategies to restore attendance for students with persistent absence.

Principles

- Schools must record daily attendance for all enrolled students in accordance with the School Education Act (1999) Section 28.
- Accurate record-keeping of attendance is vital in satisfying duty of care requirements and in generating useful attendance data.
- Daily attendance records are maintained in SEQTA and authorised absentee notifications are resolved by the classroom teacher.

Procedure

- Classroom teachers are to input morning classroom attendance by 9.00am onto SEQTA. Classroom or specialist teachers are to complete afternoon attendance by 1.30pm.
- If a student arrives at school after 8:35am, they are considered late and need to be signed in at the office by a parent via SEQTA Kiosk. The student will then be given a blue transit slip which must be presented to the teacher when they enter the class.
- By 9:30am parents of absent students (for which no prior information has been received by the school) will be sent an absentee SMS message (available as a template in SEQTA) requesting them to make contact with the school:

Good morning. Our records show that we have recorded absentees in your family. Please email St Joseph's on admin@stjoeswaroona.wa.edu.au advising the reason for the absence. Thank You, St Joes. This is a no reply message.

The SMS message will be recorded as an unresolved absence in SEQTA. If a parent responds to the SMS message via phone the reason for the absence will be recorded in SEQTA and remain unresolved until a written follow-up note/email is received by the teacher. If a parent responds to the SMS message via email, the absence will be recorded as resolved by admin staff in SEQTA.

- A follow up absentee note (available in SEQTA) will be sent home by classroom teachers for unresolved absentees at the end of each term.
- The principal is to follow up with parents who have not returned written notification and a Pastoral care note entered.

ACCEPTED FORMS OF RESOLVED NON-ATTENDANCE REASONING

The following methods of non-attendance reasoning will be accepted by Teachers and/or Administration at St Joseph's School.

- face to face contact from a Parent, followed up in writing (either with a note signed by them or an email).
- a telephone call made direct from the School to a Parent's mobile, however, this **must** be followed up in writing (either with a note signed by a Parent/Guardian or an email).
- a telephone call made by the Child's Parent/Guardian directly to the School, however, this **must** be followed up in writing (either with a note signed by a Parent/Guardian or an email).
- an email sent to the Classroom Teacher or Administration
- a note sent to the School signed by a Parent/Guardian

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers have sole responsibility of completing the Attendance Register each day at two different intervals within the day. Education Assistants are not responsible for completing this information.

Teachers are required to follow up with Parents/Guardians on the reasons for Student absence according to the accepted forms listed above. It is recorded as an Unresolved Absence until an authorised explanation as above is received for their absence is provided. After 3 documented attempts and the inability of Parents/Guardians to provide a suitable reason for absence it is recorded as Parent Contact.

Students who arrive late to school (after 8:35am) must be processed through SEQTA Kiosk in the front office where any amendments to the class roll will be made. The student will receive a Transit Slip which is proof that the child has been signed in through SEQTA Kiosk in Admin. These slips are then returned to admin via the class 'black box' (note tray).

Classroom teachers can resolve absences once written contact has been made with them by a Parent/Guardian. A list of the appropriate icons to be used by teachers is attached. A note outlining reasons for a child's absence sent to the School by a Parent/Guardian is to be filed with class absentee notes and kept until the end of the year, when all absentee notes will be handed in to Administration for archiving.

Teachers must enter future absences of a student if they are made aware of this in advance so that parents do not receive an unnecessary absentee SMS on the day.

RELIEF TEACHER PROCEDURES

The Assistant Principal, in collaboration with the Administration Assistant is to ensure that a hard copy of the class list is made available to the Relief Teacher for attendance purposes. **The class list is to be sent to the Office in the class 'black box' by 9.00am.** The list is processed through the Front Office and returned to the class for the Relief Teacher to provide the afternoon attendance information. **The class list is then sent to the Office again after 1.20pm for the afternoon attendance recording.**

ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

St Joseph's School has appointed its Administrative Assistant and Finance Officer as Attendance Officers. Changes to online class attendance records will be made by either of them, based upon Parent/Guardian contact at the Front Office. Communication with Teachers on information received will be made when deemed necessary.



Administration will also maintain records for:

- Excursions
- Camps
- Extended absence due to medical grounds or a family holiday

Administration staff will monitor the completion of the Attendance Register for the two time periods during each day. Contact will be made with classes who have not complied with the School's requirements.




SEQTA Icons used

Classroom teacher – Attendance roll




 Absent - The student is marked as absent. No knowledge about the absence has been given	 Present - The student is marked as present and the teacher has visibly recognised the student in attendance
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NOTE: The teacher is not to use the 3rd icon available to them – 'Late' as all students must report to the front office and sign in via SEQTA Kiosk on arrival at school.

Classroom teacher – Resolving absentees

 Unresolved absence - A teacher or admin officer who has been informed of an absentee but is waiting on authorised written notification	 Medical - An authorised explanation has been received and the reason is medical in nature (i.e. sick, appointment at doctor, dentist, physio etc)
 Approved absence – The absence notification is confirmed by the teacher, principal or other authorised staff member and is not medical in nature	

Administration – apart from also using those for Classroom Teachers, Administration Staff will also use:

 Late – Authorised written notification has been accepted for a student being late to school.	 Educational activity (off campus) – This is regarded as the student being present at school but is involved in some form of educational programme or activity off the school site.
 Excursion – Used for students involved in off-site excursions.	

ABSENTEEISM

We want to make sure that all children get the best education possible which is why attending school every day is important. Western Australian law stipulates that all school-aged children must attend school every day. Developing the habit of going to school every day is vital so children do not miss out on important ideas and skills they need for future learning and for them to achieve success at school.

St Joseph's endeavours to develop an accurate picture of student attendance by gathering and analysing a wide range of information. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources provides us with a foundation to plan for improvement. Early intervention in most instances brings about improvement.

A student's attendance may be identified as a concern if:

- The number and frequency of absences is high (a student is attending <90%)
- Individual circumstances require personalised strategies

This document is intended to provide St Joseph's School with a process for intervention in circumstances where students develop patterns of persistent absences. St Joseph's Staff will deliver an attendance monitoring and intervention system that provides consistent and effective identification of all students with persistent absences. Each term, absentee data will be collated from SEQTA and recorded on the data wall in the following categories:

91% – 100% Regular Attendance
81% - 90% At Risk
61% - 80% Moderate Risk
<60% Severe Risk

When a student's attendance falls below 90%, the school will send an attendance note (see attached) outlining the student's attendance rate and informing parents that their child's absentee percentage is below the recommended level. However, continuing to send letters to parents informing them of their child's persistent absences without further consultation to determine ways of restoring attendance is not sufficient. In such situations the school chaplaincy worker will become the case manager in order to follow up issues such as school refusal and develop an appropriate plan of intervention. The case manager will coordinate meetings, document interventions and ensure that strategies are implemented and reviewed.

• **Persistent Absenteeism**

The Principal should consider whether the persistent absence places the student at suspected risk of harm and/or other elements of risk to the student's well-being. Where absenteeism persists after the attendance note is sent home:

1. The Principal will contact the parents via phone for the purpose of providing support, advice and guidance to restore regular attendance.
2. The Principal is required to investigate the matter and offer to meet with the parents to develop a plan for restoring attendance (see attached intervention plan).

Meeting with parents is essentially a conversation to:

- Identify reasons for absences
- Assess assistance and resources required to restore attendance
- Devise strategies for improvement and document these

St Joseph's school staff will work hard to foster high quality relationships with students and parents in order to engage and communicate with families in a range of supportive ways (eg referral to the School Educational Psychologist). Home visits conducted by two staff

members may demonstrate to families that our school cares and may be a place where the student and parents feel more comfortable.

The documented plan should continue to be monitored and reviewed by the school with ongoing consultation with parents. If there is a significant improvement in attendance, this should be acknowledged and celebrated according to normal school practice (eg certificate of recognition). If persistent absences continue, the school should determine whether revision of the strategies implemented should be made.

The Principal should refer the student's case to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support in circumstances where:

- The offer to convene is not accepted by the parent
- The advice and assistance the school provides is not successful in restoring attendance
- The attendance issues are in any way related to or caused by possible abuse or neglect (bearing in mind that a parent refusing to take their child to/from school could constitute neglect for their education and wellbeing)



St Joseph's School

Millar Street (PO Box 129), Waroona WA 6215

Telephone: (08) 9782 6500

admin@stjoeswaroona.wa.edu.au

www.stjoeswaroona.wa.edu.au

Date

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Attendance for: _____ (Child's Name)

At St Joseph's School, Waroona we recognise and are sympathetic to the fact that legitimate illness is a valid reason for reduced attendance. However, as partners with you in the education of your child, we are obliged to point out that reduced attendance has a large impact on academic learning.

If your child has received this letter, it means that their attendance rate for the period mentioned above is below 90%, which the Catholic Education WA classifies as being at-risk.

Attendance Percentage for the period _____ to _____ = _____%

In order to access the full curriculum, and give your child the best chance of success, Catholic Education WA recommends the rate of 90% - 100% as 'Regular Attendance'. When attendance falls below this level it indicates a student may be at risk of not reaching their full potential. The chart below gives a breakdown of the amount of time missed in a year, and if maintained, how it impacts on the future education of your child.

Period of Absence (Years 1 – 10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Level of Educational Risk
Average of 5 Days per Term	90%	1 Year	Classified as regular attendance
1 Day per Week	80%	2 Years	Indicated At-Risk
1.5 Days per Week	70%	3 Years	Moderate Risk
2 Days per Week	60%	4 Years	Moderate Risk
3 Days per Week	50%	5 Years	Severe Risk
5 Weeks per Term	40%	6 Years	Severe Risk

Absences may be due to an extended illness or extended family holiday, and if this is the case this letter is to inform you that your child's absentee percentage is below the recommended level for this term. Once a student falls below the classification of 'Regular Attendance' their weekly attendance is monitored. If the absenteeism continues, I will contact you by phone to discuss any problems with getting your child to school. Parents will then be required to attend a meeting at the school to discuss ways we can support you to improve your child's attendance.

Please contact the school if you require any further assistance in helping your child to improve their attendance so that they can optimise their learning opportunities.

Yours Sincerely,

Travis Bienkowski
Principal



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 Millar Street, Waroona, Western Australia
 PO Box 129, Waroona WA 6215
Telephone: (08) 9782 6500
 Email: admin@stjoeswaroona.wa.edu.au
 Web Site: www.stjoeswaroona.wa.edu.au

Student's Name:		Year/Form:		Date of Meeting	
Attendees at meeting:					
Objectives of meeting:					
Background – attendance data					
The following areas are strengths & interests of the student					
The reasons the student finds it hard to get to school					
Student's attendance goal for the next three weeks					
Week 1 – Week 2 - Week 3 -					
The student will take the following actions to achieve their goal					

Staff will take the following actions to help the student achieve these goals	
<p>Amongst other things consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A daily reward system and a weekly rewards system (see below) • Home visits • Adjustments to curriculum e.g. concentrating on core or favourite subjects for a period of time, modifying conditions of tests, providing additional scaffolds, a temporary reduction in homework • A letter sent home at the end of the three weeks with attendance summary/congratulatory letter when attendance achieved • Identifying a school-based support person 	
Student's parents will take the following actions to help the student achieve these goals	
<p>Amongst other things, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting homebased rewards • Morning and bedtime routines • Technology in the bedroom • Communication with the school • Accessing support from community agencies • Support with homework • A visit to the family GP for a check-up 	
Implementation start date:	Review date:

Primary Attendance Rewards Chart – Sample

This program is to be used as a reward for _____ success in improving their attendance. Each day _____ is to bring the chart to _____. If by Friday she/he achieves 3 stickers, she/he will receive a sticker the achieved box and will get a reward. If she/he achieves 9/15 days she/he will receive a super-award. Increase the goal posts as attendance improves. If the plan hasn't been achieved, reconvene the Attendance support group meeting and consider further supports.

Week 1 - My goal this week is to attend 3 days						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Achieved
Sticker						
Positive experience at school						
What did mum/dad enjoy hearing about?						
I am working towards the following goals						
At home			At School			Achieved
Weekly goal: 15 minutes on the computer at home			Weekly goal: e.g. 15 minutes on the computer			
Super goal: A trip to the zoo			Super goal: e.g. one on one basketball time			
Week 2 - My goal this week is to attend 3 days						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Achieved
Sticker						
Positive experience at school						
What did mum/dad enjoy hearing about?						
I am working towards the following goals						
At home			At School			Achieved
Weekly goal:			Weekly goal:			
Super goal:			Super goal:			
Week 3 - My goal this week is to attend 3 days						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Achieved
Sticker						
Positive experience at school						
What did mum/dad enjoy hearing about?						
I am working towards the following goals						
At home			At School			Achieved
Weekly goal:			Weekly goal:			
Super goal:			Super goal:			

References

- School Education Act 1999 –
Part 2 Enrolment and Attendance:
Division 3 Attendance all Schools; Section 28 Attendance records

Part 2 Enrolment and Attendance:
Division 5 Absentee students and non-participating students; Section 44 Evidentiary matters for s 9 and 38 charges
- Guide to Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-government Schools 2016

Chapter 2. Student Learning Sections 2.1 and 2.4
Chapter 8. Enrolment and Attendance Sections 8.2, 8.3 and 8.5
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 2014 Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

Standard 7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.
7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements.