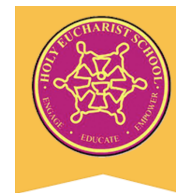


Holy Eucharist Catholic Primary School St Albans South.



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Incorporating: -Late Arrivals
-Early Departures

APPENDIX:

1. Absence Protocol

Holy Eucharist Catholic Primary School Commitment Statement to Child Safety

A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people at our Catholic school

'The intention for this statement is to provide a central focus for child safety¹ at our Catholic school, built around a common understanding of the moral imperative and overarching commitments that underpin our drive for improvement and cultural change....

...Holy Eucharist Primary School together with the CECV will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements².

¹As defined by the Victorian Government Special Gazette No. 2 (2016), 'children and young people' in this document refers to those children and young people enrolled as students in Catholic schools in Victoria.

²Holy Eucharist Catholic Primary School Commitment Statement to Child Safety

EVIDENCE OF THIS OCCURRING AT HOLY EUCHARIST

Our utmost responsibility at Holy Eucharist is to create a child-safe school environment where all absent children are recorded. All absent children that have been recorded are reported to parents at the earliest opportunity

Rationale:

Student attendance is absolutely vital to the attainment of the best possible learning outcomes. When your child is absent they miss schoolwork and regular absences can have an extremely detrimental impact upon student progress. This may also mean that students who are under-performing as a result of frequent absences suffer low self-esteem and may also feel disengaged from learning. We all want every student to have the best chance to perform at their personal best. There is a mountain of research which shows the correlation between low attendance rates and poor school performance and it is in all of our interests to implement policies and procedures to ensure that students in our school are given the best chance.

It is also critical that students learn the importance of being on time and that tardiness is not acceptable. This is a basic discipline that is vital for all students to master so that they can become productive and reliable adults. Just as tardiness is not acceptable for school staff, nor is it acceptable for school students. If we do not develop these habits early in life it becomes significantly harder to do so later on.

Regularly arriving late to school can also have a detrimental impact upon student learning. The bell to start classes goes at 8.55am so ideally students will arrive at school just before this time. This is an important time for teachers to settle students, plan for the day ahead and commence work. Research shows that young children's learning is at its most effective at the beginning of the day. It is also disruptive to other students and to teachers when students arrive late to class. Finally it is stressful for children to be late and often children begin classes in a negative frame of mind and their concentration is not as high as it should be when they are late.

If your child is genuinely ill then they should not be at school. We ask that you do contact the school and inform us if your child is going to be away from school for any reason. You need to contact the school by 9.00am.

If we have not been informed of a student absence we will phone home later in the day to follow this up. This is important as we don't want a situation where you assume that your child is here when they are not.

If a student is absent for 3 days or more then we will need to see a medical certificate. If a medical certificate is not supplied we will send a request to meet with the parent/carer. If a student has a recorded absence during the year at any time that totals greater than 3 weeks then a meeting will be requested with the parents.

Early departure

If children are required to leave school during the day e.g. doctor's appointment, sickness etc, a parent/carer must sign out their child from the school office and then collect the child from the classroom. This is expected to be an unusual rather than a regular occurrence.

Late arrival

Late arrival will be processed through the office for all students arriving after 9.15am commencing Monday 15 June. Students arriving late to school must come to the school office with an adult who signs them in, giving the reason for the late arrival. A late pass will be issued and for safety reasons, the adult dropping students off is to walk them to class. This late arrival process is to be phased in throughout the remainder of 2015. For terms 2 & 3 any child who arrives later than 9.15am will need to come to the office accompanied by an adult. If the late behaviour occurs 3 times in a week then the parent will be called in for a meeting. If the late behaviour occurs more than 5 times over any period of time in the year then the parents will be asked to attend a meeting at the school. It is proposed that in term 4 the timeframe for late arrivals to attend the office with a parent/carer will be moved forward to 9.00am. This will be advertised via the school newsletter and a letter sent home with all students.

Late pick up

It is the responsibility of all parents/carers to ensure that their child is collected from school promptly. Students are expected to be picked up at 3.15pm when the bell goes. Teachers will not be in the school yard to supervise students from 3.30pm onwards so any students who are not collected by that time will be sent to After School Care. Parents will then be expected to pay the cost of the After School Care and this is something that cannot be negotiated.

Aims:

For students to attend school with as few absences as possible to ensure that their optimum learning outcomes are met. For students and parents to learn that it is not okay for students to be away and that punctuality is an important value of the school which we as adults need to model for our children to learn this.

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented throughout 2015. In week 8 of term 2, Monday 15 June, the new policy will be implemented. This new policy will be communicated to all parents via the newsletter in the previous weeks. In addition a separate document outlining the introduction of the new policy will be sent home with all students. All staff will be briefed on the new policy and the importance of ensuring that they complete their attendance rolls promptly in addition to sending any late arrivals to the office. In the first few weeks we may need to make a call to any parents who have dropped their children off late without accompanying them to the office to advise them of the policy if for some reason they are not aware of this. It will be important for all staff to be consistent with this policy and send a message to all students and parents that lateness will not be accepted. Following a review of the new policy it is proposed that the Late Arrival section of the policy will be changed in term 4 so that all students arriving after 9.00am will be asked to report to the office for a late pass with a caregiver. It is hoped that we will be able to change the current mindset of parents who are bringing their children late to school on a regular basis. We will start with aiming to change the behaviours of those parents who are bringing their students extremely late on a regular basis with the intention of then targeting any student arriving after 9.00am.

Evaluation:

The Leadership team will look at data on specific students who were regularly arriving late (and this is later than 9.15am for term 2 & 3) and analyse whether the tardiness has improved as a result of this policy implementation. If this is the case and there is an improvement observed due to policy implementation then the timeframe for students to report to the office with a caregiver will be moved to an earlier time of 9.00am.

The Leadership team will also analyse the data for school absences and see whether the policy implementation of meeting with parents after a child has been absent has been effective and has resulted in fewer recorded absences.

Resources:

Date of Ratification: 22 June 2015

Reviewed: 2018

Absence Protocol

