St Brigid's School

Policy and Procedure Document

ATTENDANCE POLICY

CONTEXT

The Education Act (1972) requires that children of compulsory school age 6 - 17 years are enrolled at and attending school. Once a child is enrolled, they are required by law to attend school. The responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/caregiver.

St Brigid's School acknowledges the importance of students being punctual and at school 'all day, every day' because it:

- engenders a sense of belonging for the students and their community
- enables students to participate fully in their learning
- enables students to gain maximum benefit from their schooling
- shows respect of self and others in the learning environment
- is a good habit that will support future career aspirations.

POLICY STATEMENT

St Brigid's School recognises the importance of:

- student attendance at every scheduled school day and lesson
- individual student management and recording of student attendance and non-attendance
- communication with parents/caregivers in relation to student attendance

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students, parents/caregivers and is supported by staff working within or for St Brigid's School.

PRINCIPLES

Attendance is compulsory for all students enrolled at St Brigid's School. As schools are accountable to both the state and federal governments for maintaining accurate records of student attendance it is very important for all students to adhere to the procedures.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Attendance Marking	- Rolls must be marked daily by 9:15 am on SEQTA - Rolls will be checked by the administration staff by 9.30am each day. A phone call will be made to teachers if their rolls are not marked. If rolls are frequently not marked this information will be passed to the Principal. - School Leadership will be advised of unmarked and incorrectly marked rolls. Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class.
Absent Categories	Students who are: - not in class, and notification has not been received from a Legal Guardian, will be marked 'Absent' - not in class and notification has been received from a Legal Guardian advising the student is unwell, will be marked 'Illness'. Other absence reasons will be marked accordingly eg. 'Medical/Dental Appointment', 'Personal/Family' etc.
Explained Absences	- Families can complete an application for exemption form - for their children who will be absent for periods of time of more than 3 days, eg. Flexible Learning, Medical Procedure or Family Vacation. - If Legal Guardians have informed the school of an absence, administration staff will enter these details into SEQTA. - Class teachers should inform the front office if they are notified of any student absences for them to enter to SEQTA. - Students will only be marked as 'Absent – Not Required to Attend', 'Absent – Truant' or 'Absent – Internal Suspension' upon instruction from School Leadership.
Unexplained Absences	- An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the Legal Guardian does not contact the school. - An SMS message will be sent to the enrolling parents by approximately 9.30 am each day. Class teachers will follow up any unexplained absences by making contact with the student's Legal Guardians.
Late Arrivals	- A student is considered to have arrived late any time after the 8.50am bell and the roll is taken at 9am of each day by the class teacher. - All students arriving late must be signed in at the front office. - The late arrival information will be entered onto SEQTA by administration staff. - If teachers observe a student has made a habit of arriving late or is late for three consecutive days, they will contact the student's Legal Guardian.

Early Departures	• A student is considered to be leaving early any time before 3.00pm. As with Late Arrivals, all students leaving early must be signed out at the front office by an approved emergency contact. • The early departure information will be entered into SEQTA by administration staff.
SMS Messages	• Unexplained Absences: An SMS message will be sent to students' Legal • Guardians by 9.30am each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences. Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to Leadership. The school will follow up by telephoning the student's Legal Guardians.
Activities	• An activity will be entered into SEQTA for students attending excursions, camps and other school-based activities. • Activities will be marked by the administration staff, eg. 'Excursion'. • These attendance categories must not be changed unless the student is present at school and then the category should be changed to 'In Class'.
Attendance Marking Training	• School leadership will provide attendance marking training to teaching staff on commencement. • School leadership will ensure all staff receive a copy of the Attendance Policy and will review this document annually. • A copy of the Attendance Policy will be included in Temporary Relief Teacher Induction
Other	• In the event of an evacuation, a class roll will be taken to evacuation area and marked by the class teacher. The class teacher will advise the Fire Warden of the evacuation of any students not accounted for.

OBLIGATIONS

Parents/caregivers will:
- ensure that their child/children attend school every day during term time
- support their child/children to arrive at school by 8:50am at the latest
- notify the school via the absentee line, or via SMS, email by no later than 9am if their child is unable to attend on a particular day, or if their child will be late to school, providing a reason for absence or lateness
- inform the school if an extended absence (greater than 3 days) is likely,
- on request, supply a medical certificate for long absences of their child/ren
- notify the teacher or front office if their child is to leave school early by contacting the front office, or email
- ensure that all emergency contact details, including the parent/caregiver's mobile telephone number, are up to date and current.

Staff will:
- monitor each student's attendance and/or lateness
- ensure that the SEQTA attendance records are accurate
- contact the parent/caregiver regarding a student's inconsistent or ongoing unexplained non-attendance
- liaise with the school leaders if communications with parent/caregivers are unsuccessful
- build and maintain good relationships and open lines of communication with the student and their family
- phone parent/caregiver and ascertain the reason of unexplained absence after three days of non-attendance
- liaise with parents regarding strategies to re-engage the student to attend school
- liaise with leaders when parent/caregiver contact is unsuccessful and when ongoing absences occur
- liaise with parent/caregiver by phone, email, letter and document with SEQTA interventions, strategies, phone calls regarding unresolved absenteeism.

Administration staff will:
- manage all late and early student departures
- ensure any correspondence or messages regarding absence are recorded in SEQTA
- manage attendance data on SEQTA daily
- ensure the SMS non-attendance system is operational no later than 9.30am
- not allow students to leave the school unless parent permission is received via phone or email
- liaise with the Leadership Team when appropriate

Leadership will:
- support parent/caregiver to complete the appropriate documentation for approval of temporary or permanent exemptions
- liaise with parent/caregiver regarding modified attendance, alternative programs, health care plans, restorative practices and curricular support; report high unexplained absences of Indigenous students to the Aboriginal Education Advisor at Catholic Education SA (CESA)
- contact an Attendance Officer, if attendance issues are not resolved or if a student is absent for ten (10) days or more per term
- oversee the ongoing monitoring and re-engagement of the student once a referral has been made

February 2022