



Stella Maris Primary School

Attendance Policy

Rationale

The Education Act 2013 requires that children of school age (six-seventeen years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.

Aim

To maximize student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly and without unnecessary absences.

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.
- 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 SAS2000 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 and Student Wellbeing leader 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.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.
- A letter explaining the importance of school attendance is sent home with semester reports, if necessary. Attachment 1.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in each Review Year

References

It's Not Ok To Be Away

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/archive/Pages/studentattendance.aspx>

Attachment 1- School Attendance Letter to Parents and Guardians



This policy was ratified in 2008
This policy will be reviewed in each Review Year
This policy was last reviewed in February 2016



Dear Parents and Guardians,

RE: School Attendance

At Stella Maris we realize that there are times during the year when children need to spend time away from school.

When a child is injured or sick, we expect you to keep them at home, to limit the spread of sickness. Where possible, specialist appointments should be made during out of school hours. We also realize that sometimes, especially with busy specialists, this is impossible.

We ask you to please schedule holidays for school holiday periods, rather than during school time. Again, we realize that this is not always possible and that sometimes holidays need to be taken during school time, particularly if it is a special family event.

Please use the following guide to reflect on the number of days your child has been absent from school this semester (half year)

How many days has your child missed this semester (half year)?

- 0-6 This is within normal range. A child with this attendance rate is able to take full advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities available to them.
- 7-10 This attendance rate is below average. A child with this attendance rate could miss over one year of schooling between Prep and year 10.
- 11-20 This is a poor attendance rate. A child with this attendance rate could miss out on up to two years of schooling between Prep and year 10.
- 20+ This is a very poor attendance rate. A child with this attendance rate could miss out on up to two and one half years of schooling between Prep and year 10.

Remember

- Students need to attend school regularly to make the most of educational opportunities.
- There can be a link between school attendance and the choices available to your child, later in life.
- Poor patterns of attendance in the early years lead to poor patterns of attendance throughout the school years.
- Poor attendance makes it difficult for children to form positive relationships with their peers.
- Lateness affects your child, as he or she is unsettled and may have missed important information about the rest of the day.
- Lateness affects the teacher and the other children in the class by distracting the children and teacher from what they are learning. We value the meditation and prayer time that enables the children to start each day in a calm and focused way.
- Poor attendance habits in Primary School, often lead to even poorer habits in Secondary School.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Rob Horwood Principal