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# Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School Devonport

## Attendance Policy

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<b>Version No</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Clynton Scharvi</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Clynton Scharvi</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Related Documents</b>	<b>Attendance Procedures Student Absence Steps Template (Appendix 1) Letters - Day 5 Absence (Appendix 2) Day 10 Absence (Appendix 3) Day 15 Absence (Appendix 4)</b>

## Rationale

Schools are an integral part of society that provides children with important and necessary skills for life. The Australian Government recognises the vital role schools play in the development of the person and have therefore made a legal requirement on attendance.

Under the Education Act 1994, children who are 5 years of age on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> January are required to attend a registered school on a full-time basis, unless officially exempt, excused or approved for home education.

At Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School we believe that:

- regular attendance has a considerable impact on students' academic and social performance,
- a regular pattern of attendance at school helps to develop valuable life skills, such as commitment to family, work, social and sporting responsibilities,
- by making sure that students are at school for the required time, the school and parents are indicating a commitment to lifelong education,
- while there are, on occasions, special circumstances and family commitments which require students to be absent from school for a number of days, these occasions should be kept to a minimum,
- by adhering to this attendance policy, home-school communication is further strengthened.

## Aims

- To encourage all students and parents to see the need for consistent attendance at school.
- To encourage all students and parents to develop sound attendance patterns.
- To maximize learning opportunities by ensuring absenteeism of students is kept to a minimum.
- To put into place processes for managing absenteeism and truancy.

## Responsibilities

It is a parental responsibility to:

- ensure children attend school on a daily basis during the school week
- ensure children are not kept at home, unless they are genuinely sick
- ensure children are not taken out of school unless it is really necessary
- inform the school of their child's absence.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to:

- record student attendance/absentees in Student Records using the codes  
**A: Absent** (teacher notified)                      **L: Late**  
**S: Sick** (teacher/office notified)                **H: Holiday**  
**U: Unexplained Absence** (Admin to make phone call)
- notify the school principal of unexplained regular absences and/or when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days.

It is the responsibility of the administration staff to:

- make contact with parents via SMS  
**Please reply to this SMS or call OLOL on 64241744 as (Students Name) is recorded as absent today**, and follow up if needed with phone call, to confirm student absence.
- maintain student attendance records in the student database

It is the responsibility of the School Principal to:

- follow up regular and consecutive unexplained absences from the student's parents/guardians
- notify the Catholic Education Office when a student's absenteeism is of concern
- inform parents/guardians about the Policy.

## Policy Procedure

- All full-time enrolled students are expected to attend all of each school day
- Class teachers will mark the attendance register each morning and provide the register to the school office.
- If students are to be absent from school, parents must inform the class teacher by note, or by contacting the school by SMS or phone call, before the start of the school day.
- Office staff will cross check messages re student absence with the class registers and record the reason/s for the absence.
- The parent/guardian is to advise the class teacher or the office if a student is to be absent for longer than two consecutive days.
- If a student is away for five consecutive days without notification from the parent/guardian, then the Principal or Principal's nominee will communicate with the parent/guardian to establish the reason for the child's absence.
- Attendance records will form part of each child's half-year and end-of-year progress reports to parents.
- Class teachers are to bring to the attention of the Principal any student/s whose attendance is irregular, has unexplained absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.
- Where there is a problem of absenteeism, the Principal will contact the parents/guardians by letter to gain an explanation and will take further action as needed. *Appendix 2, 3 or 4.*  
*Appendix 2 – Up to 5 consecutive days 'yet to be explained' or 'unauthorised'*  
*Appendix 3 – 10 days in one school term 'yet to be explained' or 'unauthorised'*  
*Appendix 4 – 15 days in one school term 'yet to be explained' or 'unauthorised'*
- In the case of 20 absent days in one school term, or a pattern of absenteeism that is of concern, the Principal will initiate a case management approach with the parent/guardian to support the student to return to regular attendance.
- School procedure/chart outlining the follow-up of absenteeism is attached. *Appendix 1.*
- A copy of this policy is available on the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School website.
- New families to the school will be provided with a copy of the Policy at the time of their child/ren's enrolment.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School reminds parents of the attendance policy in the school newsletter at the start of every school year.

## Policy Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed in line with the outcome on the Tasmanian Governments Education Review Bill 2016.

## **Attendance/Absentee Procedure**

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School has implemented the following procedures to ensure the school Attendance Policy is met.

- If students are to be absent from school, parents must inform the class teacher by note, or by contacting the school and leaving a message on the absentee message bank before the start of the school day.

### **Class teachers:**

- will complete the attendance information each morning on Student Records prior to going to Daily PE.
- when going on excursions, must complete their attendance before leaving the school premises and check with the office for any messages relating to their class.
- are to bring to the attention of the Principal any student/s, whose attendance is irregular, has unexplained absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.

### **Administration staff will:**

- cross check messages re student absence with Student Records and record the reason/s for the absence.
- record any messages that are responded to on student records and in the attendance registers,
- Print a copy of the absentees and put it the absentee folder.
- Where a student has an unexplained absence the following SMS message will be sent to them *'Please reply to this SMS or call OLOL on 64241744 as (Students Name) is recorded as absent today'* and follow up if needed with phone call, to confirm student absence.

## **External Communication**

To ensure that all parents/guardians are aware of their responsibilities in relation to student absentees the following procedures have been implemented.

- New families to the school will be provided with a copy of the Attendance Policy at the time of their child/ren's enrolment.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School will remind parents of the attendance protocols in the school newsletter at the start of each term.