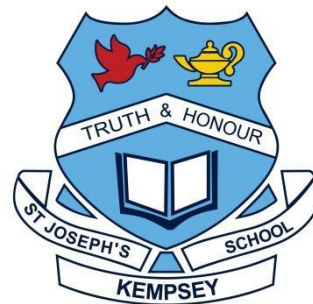


# St Joseph's Primary School, Kempsey

## ATTENDANCE POLICY



### **RATIONALE:**

The *Education Act* requires that children of school age (six-fifteen years) resident 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 CSO or Government Department.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting regular attendance of their children. School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

### **AIMS:**

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

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- A system is established for Late Arrivals/Early Leavers and this information is recorded on Schoolworx.
- Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence, shopping excursions or birthday parties are not.
- 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 provide a written note, phone call, SMS response or email to explain absence.
- Catholic Schools Office documentation will need to be completed to apply for extended leave. It is then the Principal's responsibility to either grant or deny that leave in accordance with CSO guidelines.
- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.
- The Class Teacher has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are followed up once with the attached note sent home by the teacher.
- All student absences are recorded in the morning on the electronic marking system. All recording will be done in accordance with Catholic Schools Office Lismore *"Guidelines for Management of Student Attendance" 2016*.

- Parents/Caregivers are then notified via SMS if their child is absent from school and a response via return SMS, a phone call, note or email be provided to the school explaining the absence, within seven days.
- Enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Catholic Schools Office.
- Student absence figures will appear on student record cards, student reports and files for 7 years after the student has left. In a case where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report, all attendance records should be retained until the end of year in which the student reaches the age of 25 years.
- Support for parents of students who have prolonged absence will be initiated through school and relevant agencies. Communication, collaboration and information sharing occurs with other services and agencies to enhance the effectiveness of interventions with students and families.
- Where the destination of a student below 15yrs of age is unknown, the Department of Education and Training Officer with home school liaison responsibilities will be informed of the student's name, age and last known address.

### **EVALUATION:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

*Verified by the School Leadership Team in February, 2016*