SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

STUDENT 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 Education Department.

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:
• Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find ‘catching up’ difficult.
• 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.
• 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 or return a completed absence form (See Form 1 below) to 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 in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our database and communicated to the Department of Education as required.
• The Department of Education and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
• The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained. (See Form 2 below).
• 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.
• 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 Department of Human Services.
• Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
• Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

Evaluation:
• This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.