



Policy Statement

ATTENDANCE

Date: January 2021

Aim

At St Martins Lutheran College, we work in partnership with caregivers to provide students with sequenced learning opportunities that will deliver a solid foundation for each child's future. The College is committed to providing a safe, secure and quality learning environment in which students can develop their individual talents, interests and abilities through a curriculum that fosters the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of the student.

Rationale

The Education and Children's Services Act, 2019 provides for compulsory attendance of any child aged from 6 to 17 years, at the school which they are enrolled, on any day on which instruction is provided at the school. Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students in maximising their God given potential. The College in partnership with parents/caregivers are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

Implementation

Procedure

At times students will be away from the College for different reasons. As a part of legislative requirements, the College is required to record and investigate these absences.

Collaborating with families to ensure details are recorded correctly regarding student absences is important for teachers as well as students, to monitor and assist students with continuity of education. The College is also required to advise the Department for Education of attendances. The Department for Education collate that data and publish it on the www.myschool.edu.au website.

Situations where it is acceptable for a child to miss school include times when the:

- child is too sick to leave the house;
- child has an infectious illness such as gastroenteritis, chicken pox or measles (a full list of minimum periods of exclusion for communicable diseases can be found on the Health SA website);
- child needs to attend medical or dental appointments that could not be made out of school hours;
- school Principal is provided with a genuine reason that prevents the child attending school;
- child has been granted an [exemption from school](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/schools/school-life/exemption-from-attending-school) (<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/schools/school-life/exemption-from-attending-school>);
- child has been sent home or suspended from school for disciplinary reasons.

If a student is absent due to reported illness for three or more consecutive days the Principal may request a medical certificate.

What is Expected of Parents

Absentees and Notifications: Parents are requested to inform the school if a child is absent by:

- phoning the office on 8725 1430 before 8:45am;
- emailing absent@stmartins.sa.edu.au.
- sending a note or message with a sibling;

If the school has not received information regarding an absent child by 9:30 am, the school will endeavour to contact parents via text message to ascertain that the child is legitimately absent and safe.

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Lateness: Arriving late to school, whilst sometimes unavoidable, does make things disruptive for both the student and teacher. Students will miss key organisational opportunities, pastoral care moments and introductions to teaching, new and ongoing learning tasks and social interactions with peers. Students arriving after 8:45am must sign in at the Front Office.

Extended absences from school: If families are planning an extended holiday or if a child is likely to be away from school for an extended period of time (including illness) legislation requires parents to apply to the Principal for periods of leave up to one month in length. Parents are asked to begin this process in time for the appropriate counselling and approval procedures to be put in place. Students are required to attend school until approval is granted. Conditions may also be attached to the exemption.

Families who are requesting leave must complete the relevant exemption form which is available from the College Office or website.

Exemption Form A is for students aged 6-17 years requesting leave for less than one month OR for students 6-16 years requesting leave for greater than one month.

Exemption Form B is for students aged 16-17 years requesting leave for longer than one month.

Exemption Form C is for conditional exemptions (eg disability, medical or part-time attendance).

The College is required to follow up regular absences from school and in extreme cases report truancy.

What is Expected of Teachers

Teachers are required to ensure accurate attendances and absences are recorded. The process for this is:

Mark SEQTA using the options given for Morning/Afternoon Home Group and lessons taken.

Selecting 'Present', 'Absent' or 'Late to class'

Each time you click in the cell (or at the top of the column) the attendance type icon will change.

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|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| 1 Click | Present (In class) |  |
| 2 Clicks | Absent |  |
| Ctrl+left-click | Late to class |  |

Afternoon attendance/home group MUST be completed in SEQTA to ensure accurate daily attendance reports are generated.

Junior School students should be accompanied to the Front Office by the guardian collecting them to sign out and advise of return if applicable.

Middle and Senior School students who have a written note from guardians are required to sign out at the Front Office.

Parent notifications to the class teacher for absences for students MUST be forwarded to absent@stmartins.sa.edu.au to ensure attendances are updated and entered in a timely manner.

Teachers are required to inform the relevant Head of School of repeated absences. An investigation will be conducted by the Heads of School regarding the absences that may result in reporting the truancy to the Department of Education and Child Development.

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What is Expected of Administration Staff

From the attendance data entered by teachers, each day administration staff will run an absence report at 9:30 am. From this report, administration staff will send the following notification SMS to the parent/caregiver:

“St Martins College records show (child’s name) has an unexplained absence (date).

Please reply via SMS reason for absence. Thankyou. “

Administration staff will then update SEQTA with details provided by families. Subsequently, if parents do not provide information on unexplained absences administration staff will contact parents via email or phone.

Definitions

DfE – Department for Education

AISSA – Association of Independent Schools South Australia

SEQTA – Software used by St Martins Lutheran College for student management

References

Education and Children’s Services Act, 2019

SA Government Website - sa.gov.au

My School Website - www.myschool.edu.au

[Infectious Diseases and Exclusion periods SA Health](#)

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