



## St Denis Student Attendance Procedure

**St Denis is required to keep accurate attendance records for all its students.**

This includes taking attendance. Attendance must be recorded by teaching staff at least:

- twice per day for primary and specialist schools
- in every class for secondary schools.

Although all school staff are vital in supporting regular student attendance, the principal is responsible for:

- Keeping accurate attendance records for every child enrolled in the school; these can be stored electronically but must be able to be reproduced in written form.
- Maintaining records for the appropriate period of time under the School Education Regulations 2000.
- Managing alternate attendance arrangements.
- Implementing plans and strategies to encourage regular attendance.

### **Records must include:**

- If the student was physically present or not.
- If the student was attending a different approved activity (the teacher running that activity must also record attendance).
- Any reasons given for an absence.
- If the reason for the absence is reasonable (see examples).
- A flag for unexplained absences (removed if a reason is given later).
- Information about any unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes.
- A mark for half-day attendance if the student is present for at least two hours of instruction.

### **Authorised absence (EXPLAINED):**

A principal can record an absence as 'Authorised' if there has been a reasonable explanation for a student's absence.

A reasonable excuse for the purposes of explaining a school absence can include:

- medical or dental appointments
- bereavement or attendance at a funeral, including Sorry Business
- illnesses and accidents
- unforeseen and unexplained circumstances
- compliance with another law that results in the child's absence

- The child is receiving distance education through a registered school
- The child has been suspended or expelled
- The child is attending or observing a religious event, culture observance or obligation.

#### **Unauthorised absence (UNEXPLAINED)**

A principal can record an absence as 'Unauthorised' when there has been no reasonable explanation provided for the absence. If a reason is given to the principal and it is not approved, then the school will notify the parent/carer in writing.

In general, it is expected that these absences would not be excused:

- The parent did not seek approval beforehand, or in accordance with school policy.
- The student was absent due to leisure or social activities without approval.
- The conditions of an authorised absence were not met (for example, a student absence learning plan during a family holiday was not completed).
- The parent has provided no explanation for the absences.

**Principals** should make sure attendance data is regularly monitored and analysed to look for attendance patterns. Patterns of absences can be across the school, a class or at the individual student level.

Having accurate data, including the reasons for absences, is important for:

- developing improvement strategies for students
- reporting for funding requirements
- using as evidence when there are attendance concerns.

## Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart

