



# Family Holiday Notification Policy

---



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Saltwater P-9 College on 03 8366 7700 or [saltwater.p9.co@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:saltwater.p9.co@education.vic.gov.au).

## POLICY STATEMENT

Saltwater College recognises that consistent school attendance is key to student success. Attending regularly allows students to fully engage in their education and make the most of learning opportunities, supporting them in achieving their full potential.

A positive school environment, an inclusive curriculum, and supportive structures are essential in promoting regular attendance and student success. We understand the importance of monitoring attendance to identify students who may be at risk and implement early intervention strategies where needed. We also take seriously our responsibility to uphold the legal requirement that all students under the age of seventeen attend school.

College staff play a vital role in modelling positive behaviours by promoting and reinforcing the importance of attendance and punctuality. While we acknowledge the significance of family time and cultural experiences, we are committed to maintaining a clear process to support students' learning when they are absent for family holidays.

It is important for families to understand that an approved family holiday and the development of a Student Absence Learning Plan will still result in the absence being recorded and counted toward the student's overall attendance record. The Student Absence Learning Plan is designed to guide and support families by outlining key learning areas that may be missed during the absence. While the completion of tasks within the plan can support ongoing learning, it does not replace the value of classroom instruction and peer interaction.

Any learning completed while away from school will be considered supplementary and does not automatically demonstrate proficiency. Teachers will conduct follow-up assessments and/or observations upon the student's return to determine understanding and identify any learning gaps that may require further support.

## AIMS

Saltwater College aims to:

- Support students in maintaining engagement with their education during extended family holidays.
- Establish a clear and consistent process for notifying and seeking approval for family holiday absences.
- Encourage and guide parents to actively support their child's learning during periods of absence.
- Ensure compliance with the Department of Education's attendance requirements.



- To maintain the awareness of student absence and its impacts on students' learning, wellbeing and social development.

## GUIDES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Notification and Approval

- Parents/guardians must notify the school in writing of any intended family holiday, including travel dates and destination, at least two weeks in advance or as soon as possible.
- The absence will only be approved once:
  - The parent submits a written request.
  - A Student Absence Learning Plan is developed and shared collaboratively between the classroom teacher and the parent.
  - A meeting time is organised with the Year-Level Assistant Principal, Parents, and Classroom Teacher to review the plan and provide support with any questions or concerns.

### 2. Student Absence Learning Plan

- The plan must include:
  - A brief overview of the scope of learning during the absence.
  - Learning outcomes and achievements expected.
  - Suggested resources or activities to support continued learning while away.
- Parents are expected to:
  - Actively support their child with the learning plan when and where possible.
  - Communicate with the classroom teacher if further guidance or clarification is needed.

### 3. Non-Compliance

- If the above process is incomplete, the absence will be recorded as "Parent Choice – Unapproved Holiday."
- The school will issue a formal letter acknowledging the request but noting that the absence has not been approved.

### 4. Extended Absence and Inactive Status

- Students absent for three months or more will be classified as inactive on school records.
- Upon return:
  - The family must contact the school office to complete reactivation procedures.
  - The student may not return to class until the reactivation process is finalised.

## EXPECTATIONS

- **Families:**
  - Notify the school in advance and provide any relevant travel information.
  - Support the student, where and when possible, with learning activities during their absence.



- Share completed tasks with the classroom teacher to provide insight into the learning covered during the absence and to help identify areas where additional support may be needed upon the student's return.
- To understand that while the school will be notified of the absence and the procedure will be put in place to support student learning, it will be recorded on the student's attendance record.
- **Students:**
  - Engage with and complete the suggested areas of learning outlined in the Student Absence Learning Plan (*Appendix 1*) with their parents to the best of their ability.
- **Teachers:**
  - Develop a Student Absence Learning Plan which outlines key topics that will be covered during the intended days of absence, along with some suggested supporting tasks at the students' learning ability.
  - Provide relevant materials and maintain communication if required.
  - To hold a meeting with the family and the Year-Level Assistant Principal to unpack the plan.
- **Leadership (Year-Level Assistant Principals):**
  - Ensure all family holiday requests are processed in line with this policy.
  - Attend and support the meeting with the parents to unpack the Learning Plan.
  - Approve or decline with the Attendance Officer based on completeness and alignment with school expectations.

## PROCEDURES

1. Parents are to submit a notification that outlines the family holiday.
2. The recipient of the intention for a family holiday must notify the Year-Level Assistant Principal, Attendance Officer, and Classroom Teacher.
3. Classroom teacher develops the Student Absence Learning Plan (*Appendix 1*).
4. A meeting time is organised with the Year-Level Assistant Principal, Parents, and Classroom Teacher to review the plan and provide support with any questions or concerns.
5. Approved absences are recorded as "Approved Family Holiday."
6. If this procedure has not been met, the absence is recorded as "Parent Choice—Unapproved Holiday," and a letter is issued to the family (*Appendix 2*).
7. For absences over three months, the student is made inactive and must be reactivated through the office before returning to class.

## COMMUNICATION & EVALUATION

A copy of this policy and the associated planning documents will be provided to all staff annually.

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual



- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- An abbreviated handout will be shared at parent information nights
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from the school's office staff upon request

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

#### **POLICY REVIEW & APPROVAL**

Policy last reviewed	<b>May 2025</b>
Approved by	Principal
Endorsed by	School Council
Endorsement date	22/05/25
Next scheduled review date	May 2027

This policy will be updated sooner if required by changes to Department policy or school grounds/facilities.



## APENDIX

### Appendix 1

#### Letter to parents for missed days due to a Family Holiday

Subject: Student Attendance and Family Holidays

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name],

At Saltwater College, we have high expectations for every student's attendance. Attending school regularly and on time is both a legal requirement under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and an essential foundation for your child's learning and wellbeing.

Our records show that your child, [Student Name], was recently absent from school due to a family holiday. While we understand that family experiences are important, extended absences during school terms are strongly discouraged. Time away from school interrupts learning continuity, slows academic progress, and affects classroom relationships and engagement.

We remind families that holidays should be scheduled during school breaks. Absences for holidays during term time are recorded as unapproved absences in student attendance records.

To support your child's smooth return to school, contact their classroom teacher as soon as possible to discuss how they can reconnect with their learning upon return. Teachers will provide general guidance but are not required to replicate missed classroom instruction or create individualised programs for absences related to unapproved family travel.

If you are planning a future family holiday during school term, please notify the College at least two weeks in advance in accordance with our Family Holiday Notification Policy. This allows us to accurately record the absence and plan for your child's re-engagement upon return.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring your child attends school every day the program is offered. Regular attendance is one of the most important factors contributing to your child's success, confidence, and connection at school.

Kind regards,  
[Assistant Principal's Name]  
Assistant Principal  
Saltwater College



## Appendix 2

### Student Absence Learning Plan Example

Student Absence Learning Plans are implemented to support the education of students who are absent from school for an extended period. Student Absence Learning Plans should be developed collaboratively by teachers, students and their parents.

Student Absence Learning Plan must be developed for:

- students who are planning extended absences from school, for example for a family holiday
- students suspended for more than 3 days (refer to suspension guidelines for more information)
- students who have been expelled and are in the process of a supported transition to a new school
- students subject to an expulsion appeal process (refer to expulsion guidelines for more information).

It may also be useful to develop a Return to School Plan for students who have been absent from school for an extended period.

<b>Student name:</b> _____	
<b>Year level:</b> __	<b>Date:</b> 30/04/2025
<b>Reason for absence:</b> _____	
<b>Date of last day of school:</b> 13/05/2025	<b>Date of return to school:</b> 07/06/2025
<b>Description of the educational program:</b> <p>In Writing, students will be learning about Information Reports. Before writing them, students will explore the difference between facts and opinions. They will then use facts to write an Information Report about a topic that they are an expert in. They will practise using the formal structure and text features of an Information Report, including a table of contents, sub-headings, labels and diagrams.</p> <p>In Reading, students will be learning to retell stories using a range of strategies and focusing on the features of fictional texts. One strategy to focus on is the “SWBST” summary, where students say who the story was about (<u>S</u>omeone), what did they want (<u>W</u>anted), what was the problem (<u>B</u>t), how was the problem solved (<u>S</u>o), what happened in the end (<u>I</u>hen).</p> <p>In Maths, students will be continuing their exploration of addition. They will learn and practise different strategies that they can use to solve simple addition equations using numbers up to 20. Students will also be introduced to a new unit: Time, focusing on duration (how long something takes), days of the week, and months of the year.</p> <p>In Inquiry, students will start their third Unit of Inquiry following the Transdisciplinary Theme: How We Organise Ourselves. Students will explore the central idea “Many different occupations contribute to successful communities.” They will learn about different community helpers and how they help our community. Students will then work together to identify their own responsibilities in keeping a safe and healthy community.</p>	



**Activities for the student to undertake while away from school:**

**Maths:**

- Complete the Essential Assessment questions related to Time and Addition.
- Use the calendar to keep track of your days. Which day is today? Which day was yesterday? What month are we in?
- Use the timer on your phone to time how long it takes you to: brush your teeth, eat your breakfast, get dressed, do 20 jumping jacks. Which activity took longer/shorter?

**English:**

- Keep a diary. Write one fact for every day of your trip. For example, I had cereal for breakfast and brushed my teeth for two minutes.
- Use the alphabet cards to practice your letter sounds.
- Practice stretching your sounds to read for 10 minutes daily using decodable readers.

**Other:**

- With an adult helper, read through the “Community Helper” book. Colour the pictures to make it your own.
- Do you know any other facts about these community helpers? Add your facts to your book. For example, a police officer helps keep our community safe.

**Outcomes for the student to achieve:**

Recall the days of the week in the correct order.

Solve simple addition equations using numbers up to 20, applying a “counting on” or “counting all” strategy.

Practice writing simple sentences independently.

Recognise facts as statements that are always true.

Recall an increasing number of letter sounds, using visual cues or embedded pictures for support.

Practice stretching out sounds to read consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words.

Explore the roles of different community helpers and demonstrate prior knowledge about them.

**Resources the student may find useful:**

Essential Assessment Worksheets – for Time and Addition

Alphabet cards with embedded pictures

Printed decodable books

Community Helper booklet

**Agreed role of parents/carers in supporting the absence learning program:**

To support \_\_\_\_\_ as best as possible with some of the tasks outlined in this plan.

Contact details for the student to stay in touch:

\_\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_\_@education.vic.gov.au

School contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of **the** parent/carer:

School phone number:

(03) 8366 7700

Signature of **the Assistant Principal:**

\_\_\_\_\_