

Attendance Policy

(AP 330)

School Attendance

All lates and absences must be reported to the office at 403-527-7616 or stmarys@mhcbe.ab.ca.

Regular attendance directly relates to student success in school. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that children arrive on time to school. When calls have not been received after morning and afternoon attendance, confirmation calls to home or place of work will be made to ensure the student who is absent is safe and accounted for.

Because regular attendance and punctuality are important factors in achieving excellence in the teaching/learning process within a classroom, the School Act states that students are to miss school only if it is an **unavoidable circumstance or if they are ill**. The following are actions taken by the school to promote regular attendance.

Responsibilities

1. **Students** have the primary responsibility for attendance in all classes and parents have the secondary responsibility for attendance of their child in all classes.
2. **Teachers** are responsible to take attendance every period each day.
3. **Parents** are responsible for informing school personnel of all absences.
4. **Students** are responsible to catch up on missed material if their absences are unavoidable or school generated. (Field trips, sports, etc.)

Homework Requests and Student Absences

Parents/guardians sometimes choose to take students out of school for extended periods for vacations, visits to relatives, assistance to the family and so on. In such situations, the Alberta Education Act states these as “Non-Excusable Reasons.” Regular class attendance is important for achievement.

Teachers will not provide work and/or homework in advance for absences related to vacations, family visits, etc. In these circumstances, students will be required to catch up upon their return. Students are welcome to access the St. Mary’s School internal class websites. Please refer to [Internal Websites](#) for more information.

In cases of extended illness or injury, please contact the school to make arrangements for work and homework.

Consequences of Excessive Absences

On an ongoing basis, and as concerns about attendance arise, the following actions may be taken:

- 1) The school counsellor may reach out to families to offer support and assistance.
- 2) School Administration may request a meeting with the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s).

- 3) An attendance intervention plan will be developed.+
- 4) Other interventions as administration deem necessary, including involvement of the Medicine Hat Police School Resource Officer.
- 5) Referral to the Division Attendance Officer.

Notification of Excessive Absences

Parents/guardians will be notified of excessive absences at the end of each reporting period (November and March). Notifications will be sent if students' absences have reached greater than 10% and will include both excused and unexcused absences. Excessive absence notifications will be distributed by email.

Late Policy

Punctuality is an important expectation of student behaviour, according to the School Act. Punctual students show respect for the learning of others by not disrupting a class in session. As well, instruction is crucial for the direction/expectation of assignments, which are usually given at the start of a period. This policy attempts to provide a balance between clear consequences for numerous lates with a "three chances" so that punctuality becomes a habit for students. We also recognize that sometimes being late is unavoidable. **Students who arrive late to school must sign in at the front office.**

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education has established a standardized system for reporting student absences across the division. The attendance codes are utilized for reporting to Alberta Education and/or Alberta Health. If your child is absent or tardy, you will notice one of the following explanations for their absence:

- (P) Present
- (A) Absent - These are any absences that are not explained in the rest of the categories or the parent/guardian does not call in
- (I) Illness/Injury
- (E) Explained - Parent/Guardian has called in with a reason (Parental, Bereavement, Holidays etc)
- (X) Late - Excused
- (L) Late - Unexcused
- (Y) Left Early - Excused
- (Z) Left Early - Unexcused
- (M) Medical/Appointment (including dental/eye, etc)
- (F) School Function (field trip, sports event, etc)
- (S) Suspension - In School
- (T) Suspension - Out of School
- (N) Transportation/Weather