

## Student Attendance

### Rationale:

- (The *Education Act 1958*) requires that children of school age (six-fifteen years) resident in Victoria 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 Regional Director.
- 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 to students underachieving at school.

### Aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary 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/phone call or skoolbag notification to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
- Absences of all types – including parentally approved, unapproved, suspensions and truancy will normally count towards overall school absences.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences will be recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our CASES database and communicated to the Department of Education and Training.
- In line with network protocols codes for absences will be consistently used.
- 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.
- Classroom teachers or office staff will follow up on absences on the day of absenteeism if no parent contact has been received.
- 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 DET and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

### **Appendix:**

#### ***KEY Absences***

##### **1.1.1 *Medically Certificated Absences-***

Extended sick days require certificates must be submitted to the school.

##### **1.1.2 *Extended family holidays-***

The Classroom teacher or General Office should be informed in writing ahead of time of such holiday arrangements. A formal Holiday Learning Plan *An extended Family Holiday is any holiday that exceeds 5 days of missed school.*

##### **1.1.3 *Funerals and other major family events***

Notified prior to the event via a note or phone call.

##### **1.1.4 *Legitimate appointments***

Notified prior to the event via a note or appointment card, and proof of attendance following the appointment e.g. Medical Certificate of attendance to appointment.

##### **1.1.5 *School sanctioned activities-*** NOT considered as an absence.

These include activities such as school sport, music lessons and performances, College productions, excursions and camps, work placements, student meetings, counselling, community involvement activities and others as determined by the Principal. The Principal will make any final decision as to whether an absence will be exempt.

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### **Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.