

Rationale:

The Department of Education and Training (DET) requires all children of school age (6 to 17 years) 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. Daily attendance is important for all children to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally.

Aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary absences.
- That regular lateness is minimised as the cumulative effect of this has a major impact on learning and socialisation.

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.
- 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.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained by the teachers and office staff and monitored at school.

Recording Attendance

- Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher by 9:10am, at the start of the school day and after lunch by 2:00pm using Compass or the manual roll.
- If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as present.
- The DET and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.

Recording Absences

- Parents are required to notify the school as soon as possible **on the day of the absence** using one of the following methods :
 1. **Online:** log the absence directly using Compass School Manager
 2. **Telephone:** the school office and leave a message on the Absence line (option 1) with your child's name, class date of absence and reason.
 3. **Email:** the school office and provide the staff with your child's name, class, date of absence and reason.

- Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and will endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.
- Parents are required to notify the school if their child is going to be late for any reason as soon as possible by either **telephone** or **email**.
- All students arriving late to school must be signed in by their parent/carer at the front office via Compass Kiosk, to ensure their attendance status has been updated. The same process applies for collecting students from school early.
- The school will notify parents/carers by Compass push notification/SMS/email or phone call on the same day if a student is absent and the school has not been previously notified.
- The school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school. Where possible, this contact will be made on the same day of the unexplained absence.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- Where absences are of a concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, the school will work collaboratively with parents, the student and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance including :
 - establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
 - implementing a Return to School Plan
 - implementing an Individual Education Plan
 - implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
 - arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Human Services and the DET's School Attendance Officer in the South Eastern Victorian Region for further action.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and Training and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

Resources:

Compass Parent Portal
School telephone (option 1: Reporting an absence)
Compass Kiosk (ipad sign in & out)

Renewal and Approval:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle or when DET Attendance Guidelines require it to be amended.