



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 93064144.

Rationale:

Daily school attendance is important for all students to succeed in education. Regular attendance supports social, emotional and academic achievement. In accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, schooling is compulsory for students aged from 6 – 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that students required to attend school do so regularly and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.
- To provide strategies to encourage high levels of school attendance and improve student attendance.

The Importance of Full Time Attendance

- Daily school attendance is important for all students to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally.
- Students who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes and higher incomes across their lives.
- It is important that students develop habits of regular attendance at an early age.
- School participation is important as it maximises life opportunities for students by providing them with education and support networks.
- Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence – shopping, excursions or birthday parties are not acceptable reasons for absence.

Reporting and Recording Attendance**Parent responsibilities**

- Parents / Caregivers are required to ensure their child attends school and provides an explanation for their child's absence from school.
- Staff must record the reason (if any) given by the parent/Caregiver. Staff must be able to determine from the records if the excuse given was reasonable in terms of the parent meeting their legal obligations.
- Parents need to contact the school by 9:30am to state the reason for their child's absence or send a message via the Xuno app.
- Parents/Caregivers who wish to take their child out of school for an extended length of time, must meet with the Principal prior to their departure. If the Principal approves the extended absence, both the Parent/Caregiver and the Principal must sign the Confirmation of Extended Student Absence form.

School responsibilities

- Our school will record student attendance twice per day and record the reason given for each absence.

- Our school will report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community at least once a year.
- Daily messages and phone calls will be made to parents who have failed to provide a reason for absence.
- The Primary Welfare Officer will make phone calls daily to at risk students who have poor attendance.
- 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 Health and Human Services.
- Students with 100% attendance will receive an attendance band at the end of each term. Students with excellent attendance will receive certificates of achievement.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student reports.
- The Attendance Committee will meet on a regular basis. The main focus is to monitor absenteeism and punctuality and devise strategies to encourage attendance and punctuality.

Principal responsibilities

- The Principal will determine if the excuse provided for an absence is reasonable for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.
- The Principal or their nominee will monitor that student attendance occurs twice per day and the reason given for an absence.
- The Principal will ensure parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences are contacted, with the view to develop and implement strategies to minimise absences.
- The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.

Following up Absences

- Students who are at risk in regard to absence will be managed by the Primary Welfare Officer.
- The Primary Welfare Officer will work with Parents/Caregivers and discuss strategies to improve attendance.
- Parents/Caregivers will be informed that if a student has repeated absences without a reasonable excuse or explanation, they will be followed up by the welfare team.

No Reasonable Excuse Provided

- If the Principal decides that no reasonable excuse has been provided for an absence, the absence must be recorded as such, and the Parent/Caregiver must be informed that this means they may not have met their obligations under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. An accumulation of these absences could lead to a School Attendance Notice from a School Attendance Officer and/or failure to comply with the School Attendance Notice may result in the issue of an Infringement Notice.

Unexplained Absences

- If a Parent/Caregiver does not contact the school to provide an explanation on the day of the student absence, the school will attempt to contact the Parent/Caregiver (for example by telephone) of the student. If an explanation is received, the accurate cause of the absence will be recorded.
- If contact cannot be made with the Parent/Caregiver, the school will attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school.
- If following contact, no explanation has been provided, the absence will be recorded as an unexplained absence.

Strategies to Improve Student Attendance

- Through regular monitoring of attendance and absence patterns and reviewing the excuses given for absences, the school may identify that a student is at risk of poor attendance or becoming disengaged.

- The school will consider follow up and improvement strategies when a student has been absent more than five days in a term for any reason (indicating attendance falling below 90 per cent), even for parent approved health-related absences.
- The school will also follow up and implement improvement strategies where: the absence is having a significant impact on a student's educational attainment, achievement and development, a student has been truanting (absent without parental consent), a parent reports that a student refuses to attend school, there has been no explanation for the student's absence and /or a parent repeatedly fails to provide a reasonable excuse for their child's absence.

Referral to a School Attendance Officer

- Referring a student attendance matter to a School Attendance Officer may be appropriate where the Principal determines that:
 - intervention strategies have been unable to secure parental engagement and improvement in school attendance.

School Attendance Notice

- As detailed in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* to send a School Attendance Notice to a parent a School Attendance Officer must be satisfied that: the student has been absent from school on **at least five full days** in the previous 12 months and the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences, measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and been unsuccessful, or are inappropriate in the circumstances.

Infringement Notices

The issuing of an Infringement Notice should be an action only of last resort. Infringement Notices issued in relation to school attendance must comply with the Infringements Act 2006. School Attendance Officers have discretion about which action to take.

Evaluation:

This policy has been endorsed by the Principal and will be reviewed every 3-4 years as part of the school's policy review cycle.