



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **Rationale:**

- The *Education Act 2006* requires that children of school age (six-seventeen 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.

### **Aims:**

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous 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.
- Teachers have a responsibility to record student attendance/absence twice a day, at 9:30am and 2:30pm, using nForma software program or a handwritten checklist.
- Students will be recorded as 'late' up until 9:30am. After this time, they will be marked as having a 'morning absence'.
- Students will be recorded as having an 'early dismissal' if they leave any time after 2:30pm. If students leave before 2:30pm, they will be marked as having an 'afternoon absence'.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents must inform the school of their child's absence on the same day prior to the commencement of the day at 8:50am. This may be done by contacting the school on 96992928 directly, and leaving a message on the school answering machine.

- Parents have a responsibility to ring by no later than 8:50am on the day of absence and send in a note upon return explaining why an absence has occurred.
- A review of the Attendance Guidelines for schools was undertaken by the Victorian Minister for Education in Term 4, 2017. Resulting changes to the Attendance Guidelines now state: 'schools must advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students'. Full implementation of the new Attendance Guidelines will be required by all schools by the end of Term 2, 2018.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- 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.
- The Department of Education and Catholic Education Melbourne may seek student attendance records.
- Where an unexplained absence is identified the school will: 1/make all reasonable attempts to contact the parents/guardians that morning. This will in the first instance be done via an automated email message, 2/ Where no response is received by the parents/guardians that morning a subsequent phone call will be made to seek an explanation, 3/ In the event that contact cannot be made with the parents/guardians the school will attempt to communicate with emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file, **4/ Where there is no response and there are concerns for the safety and welfare of the student contact may be made with Victoria Police.**
- Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in: 1/a formal attendance conference being organised with parent/s, 2/unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to Catholic Education Melbourne and then 3/ unresolved attendance issues to then be reported to the Department of Education and Training Attendance Officer.
- 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.

Reviewed by School Leadership 2018

