



## Student Attendance Policy

### Background

It is crucial that children develop habits of regular school attendance from an early age. International studies have found a strong correlation between students learning, longer-term life outcomes, attendance at school and appropriate participation in education programs.

Poor patterns of attendance place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and render them disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations.

### Purpose

To:

- Ensure all enrolled children attend school.
- Maximise learning opportunities by ensuring absenteeism of students is kept to a minimum at Huntingdale Primary School.
- Ensure Huntingdale Primary School has effective processes for managing student attendance.
- Comply with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007*, *Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013* and *Department Education and Training policies and procedures*.

### Implementation

- The Principal has overall responsibility of overseeing this policy. S/he will delegate responsibilities to suitably qualified staff to implement.
- All students must attend school at all times when the school is open for instruction.
- If a student requires exemption from school attendance for a longer period of time (e.g. short term entertainment industry employment, for example acting) or a reduction in school attendance hours, this must be approved by the Regional Director. The following link outlines exemption categories and processes:
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/attendanceexemption.aspx>
- Students do not have to attend school if participating in an agreed Home Schooling or Distance Education arrangement. The following links outlines the Home Schooling registration process:
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/homeschool.aspx>
- The following link outlines the Distance Education protocols: <http://www.distance.vic.edu.au/>
- If a child's attendance is of concern the Principal or nominee and classroom teacher should initially meet with the parents/caregivers to discuss the reasons for being absent.
- If attendance issues continue to be of concern, a student support group may be formed including the child's teacher, outside agencies, the child, the parents/care givers and Principal/Principal's Nominee to devise an Individual Education Plan focused on and/or attendance/return to school plan. Further details of this process can be found in the Student Engagement Policy [pages 19-22]  
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf>

Further information on managing student absences can also be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/managingabsence.aspx>



At Huntingdale Primary School it is recognised that the school, teachers, parents, administration staff and students have a role in ensuring maximum student attendance and have the following responsibilities:

## School

The school will:

- Develop policies and procedures to support student attendance.
- Maintain attendance records. (e.g. CASES21, Tiq Biz)
- Ensure attendance data forms part of each child's half year and end of year progress reports to parents.
- Communicate clearly to parents attendance expectations (including being punctual to school) in the newsletter.
- Sending out DET brochures about attendance (e.g. Every Day Counts)
- Awarding classes with low absences and late arrivals at assembly.
- Be familiar with DET's 'Every Day Counts' resources and information at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/everyday.aspx>

## Administration Staff

Administration staff will:

- Pass on any telephone messages for student absence to classroom teachers.
- Generate CASES21 absence letters each month to ask parents/guardians to explain absences that have not been reported to the school.
- Archive all student absence notes.
- Monitor that all attendance data has been entered into the CASES21 system.
- Monitor that students who are late use TiqBiz to sign in

## Teachers

Classroom teachers will:

- Mark the attendance roll at 9.00am and 2.30pm each day. While the roll may be marked using a paper roll, all attendance data must ultimately be recorded using the CASES21 online system.
- Ensure that student absences are recorded using the correct CASES21 codes.
- Ensure the roll is available in the classroom for casual replacement teachers to use in the event of teacher absence.
- Promote the importance of attendance in their grade.
- Closely monitor student attendance in their grade.
- Acknowledge students with excellent attendance.
- Follow up with parents (e.g. phone call) on students who have been absent for 3 days.
- Pass on absent notes to administration staff to be archived.
- Report to the Principal/Assistant Principal concerns about a student's high absenteeism.
- Actively participate in support group meetings for students with high absenteeism.

## Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians must:

- Enrol a child of compulsory school-age at a registered school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction or seek enrolment for approved tuition.
- Provide a written note, detailing the reason/s for their child's absence. These notes are to be given to the classroom teacher.



- Inform the school ahead of time of planned absences (e.g. family holiday) either using Tiq Biz, an email or a note to the office.
- As much as possible schedule appointments outside of school time and not have days off for unnecessary events such as shopping or birthdays.
- Encourage their child to attend school and outline the benefits in doing so.
- Inform the school immediately of any attendance issues with their child.
- Work with the school to rectify any attendance issues with their child.

## Students

Students should:

- Attend school every day.
- Inform their teacher/parents of any issues which may compromise their attendance at school.

## Evaluation

CASES21 enrolment data and Attendance trends in the School Level Report will be used to monitor this policy. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year cycle.

## Certification

This policy was endorsed by School Council at the meeting held on 18 August 2015

Signed.....

*Principal*

Signed.....

*School Council President*

