

ATTENDANCE

POLICY

Aims

- Maximise learning opportunities by ensuring student absenteeism is kept to a minimum
- Establish agreed processes for managing student absences within the school
- Create a parent culture that views regular school attendance and communication of student absences to the school as important.

Rationale

Students of school age (6 to 17 years) that reside in Victoria are required to be in full time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they:

- Receive approved home tuition
- Share enrolment with a specialist setting
- Receive exemption from the Regional Director
- Enrol in correspondence education.

This policy read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines. At Templeton Primary School, we consider attendance less than 90% to be detrimental to the student's education.

Implementation

Teachers will

- Accurately mark rolls before 9:15 am and 2.00 pm daily using Cases 21 and/or paper roll to meet legislative requirements and discharge duty of care for all students
- If students attend a school-approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them present on Cases 21 and/or paper roll
- Address persistent lateness with parent/guardian
- Monitor student attendance and contact parents or inform Assistant Principal if there are frequent absences
- Reinforce the importance of regular attendance.

Parents will

- Ensure their child is at school every day unless there is a legitimate reason for the child's absence
- Provide an explanation for their child's absence (letter, phone call, email, Flexibuzz) and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Students will

- Attend school regularly
- Supply teachers with a note from their parent explaining each absence where appropriate.

The Assistant Principal will:

- Follow up attendance of those students identified as having unsatisfactory attendance or persistent lateness
- Place articles in the newsletter about school attendance.

Recording absences

- For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school before 9:15 am
- If a student is absent on a particular day and a parent has not previously notified the school, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Cases 21 will notify parents via SMS as soon as the roll is marked online on the same day of the unexplained absence.
- The Office staff will file a record of the reason given for each absence. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.
- If the Principal considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence, the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.
- If the school determines no reasonable excuse has been provided the absence will be marked as '**unexcused absence**'.
- The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:
 - medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
 - bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student
 - school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
 - cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
 - family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance.
- If the parent provides no explanation within 10 school days, the absence will be recorded as an '**unexplained absence**' and noted on the student's file.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of 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:

- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Learning 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.

Templeton Primary School recognises that some students will need additional support and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support where required.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Templeton Primary School decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, the Principal, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer for further action.

Evaluation

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

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

June 2018

References

DET Guidelines

It's Not OK to be Away –Victorian Government

[School Attendance Guidelines](#)

School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)