



## STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **RATIONALE**

It is crucial that students develop habits of regular school attendance from an early age. 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 future years.

### **GOALS**

- To ensure all enrolled students attend school and maximise learning opportunities by ensuring absenteeism of students is kept to a minimum at Mount Waverley Heights Primary School
- To ensure Mount Waverley Heights Primary School has effective processes for managing student attendance
- To comply with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, *Family Law Act 1975* and *Student Engagement Policy 2012*

### **GUIDELINES**

- The Principal has overall responsibility of overseeing school attendance and the implementation of this policy
- All students must attend school at all times when the school is open for instruction
- If a child's attendance is of concern the principal should initially meet with the parents/caregivers and child to discuss the reasons for being absent
- A student support group may be formed including the child's teacher, outside agencies, the parents and principal to devise an attendance/return to school plan
- At Mount Waverley Heights 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 procedures to support student attendance - e.g. use Sentral functionality to email parents in the morning if their child is absent from school and no explanation has been provided
- Maintain attendance records as per DET requirements
- Ensure attendance data forms part of each child's half year and end of year progress reports to parents
- Communicate clearly with parents the attendance expectations (including being punctual to school) in the newsletter
- Be familiar with 'It's not Ok to be Away' resource located at:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/archive/Pages/studentattendance.aspx>

#### **Teachers**

Classroom teachers will:

- Mark the attendance roll at 9.00am and 2.30pm each day. All attendance data must be recorded using Sentral online system
- Ensure that student absences are recorded using the correct Sentral codes

- Ensure a paper roll is available in the classroom for casual replacement teachers to use in the event of teacher absence; it is the classroom teacher's responsibility to ensure this data is entered onto the system in a timely manner
- Promote the importance of attendance in their grade
- Closely monitor student attendance in their grade
- 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; absent notes, phone calls, etc. are classified as an explained absence and need to be entered on Sentral
- Report to the Principal concerns about a student's high absenteeism
- Actively participate in support group meetings for students with high absenteeism

### **Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians must:

- Provide a written note, phone the school or use the Absence application in Sentral, detailing the reason/s for their child's absence, to the classroom teacher
- Inform the school ahead of time of planned absences (e.g. family holiday)
- Inform the school immediately of any attendance issues with their child
- Work with the school to rectify any attendance issues with their child

### **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
- Generate reports for student absences for teachers to use in student reports
- Monitor that all teachers have entered student attendance in the eCASES21 system

**This policy will be reviewed as a part of the school's cyclic review process.**

**Status:** Reviewed August 2018

**Ratified:** September 2018

**Next Review:** August 2021