

# ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY



## Rationale:

- School attendance and punctuality are essential elements of engagement in learning. Children of school age are required to be in full-time attendance at school unless they are receiving approved home school education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director. Student punctuality is also a key component of attendance as being on time enables full participation in the school learning program. Lateness by students causes unnecessary interruption, disrupts learning for self and others and compromises the school's capacity to operate effectively. Teaching and learning programs are developmental, sequential and build on prior learning. Regular lateness and absence from school can lead to gaps in student understanding making it difficult for students to reach their academic potential. Absenteeism contributes significantly to student being at risk of becoming disengaged from learning and may lead to students feeling isolated from peers.
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## Aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary absences.
- To reduce the impact on student learning of repeated or regular absence and/or lateness
- To provide a school learning program which runs smoothly and efficiently where all students can participate fully without causing disruption and stress.

## Implementation:

- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Illness or medical appointments are reasonable grounds for an absence or lateness- shopping excursions, days off for birthdays and sleeping in are not.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent or late if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents are required to fill out a late pass and sign the late book in the office if their child is late.
- Parents are required to provide a written note or verbal communication to the school explaining why an absence has occurred. Verbal communication will be recorded on an absence slip and provided to the teacher who will mark the roll accordingly. Written communication from parents and verbal notification slips are to be kept in accordance with DET records procedures. .
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that absence and attendance records are maintained and monitored at school. Teachers must inform the principal when a student has 2 or more unexplained absence days in a row, is frequently absent or is regularly late.
- All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers and are aggregated and communicated to the Department of Education.
- The Department of Education and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The principal will ensure parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences or lateness are contacted, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absence from the school programs.
- 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 Human Services and/or DET.

- Teachers should encourage attendance and punctuality. Students with excellent attendance records will receive certificates of achievement at the end of each term.
- Posters encouraging school attendance will feature prominently, as well as newsletter articles.
- Student attendance figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.
- Students with reasonable grounds for lateness will be assisted in their personal circumstances by school staff as appropriate.
- Teachers are available to support parents to plan an alternative individual learning program for their children should they take extended absence from school such as family holidays.

**Resources:**

Every Day Counts –

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx>

**Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle and in consultation with members of the wider school community.

This policy was last ratified by Wandin Yallock Primary School Council in **MAY 2017.**