

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

ARARAT PRIMARY SCHOOL 800

At Ararat Primary School, we are committed to the provision of a safe, success orientated and caring environment. We believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance provides children access to a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential. School staff should set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

Our aim is to ensure all children can access equitable educational outcomes. Monitoring of school attendance enables identification of students at risk and the early implementation of intervention strategies. We believe the early detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance and the provision of organisational structures, which are responsive to the needs of students, is vital.

All members of the school community are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skill as consistently as possible.

## **General**

A child who turns five years of age by April 30<sup>th</sup> or in the year he/she turns six is of compulsory school age irrespective of distance from the school or whether the student has a disability or not (Education and Training Reform Act 2006). These students are required to be enrolled at a registered or non-government school and must attend the school on every day instruction is provided at the school for the child, unless the Minister has granted an exemption from school attendance.

The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/guardian. The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with the DEECD. The department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

Students are expected to attend normal school hours every day of each term. An exemption should be sought if the attendance expectation is reduced for a particular child. A principal or regional director (depending on the circumstances) may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance to be exempt or reduced to less than full time.

For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/guardian should provide an explanation on each occasion, and the school will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Exemptions from school attendance may be granted in some circumstances. All applications for exemptions are considered on a case by case basis, with the child's best interests as the guiding principle for decision-making. In making a decision, the potential benefits or negative consequences of granting the exemption to the child's educational progress, wellbeing and development, are also considered.

Ararat Primary School will maintain attendance records and develop policies to support and maintain attendance.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Parent's responsibilities**

Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school -

- Children must arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.50am.
- Children must attend school every day when instruction is offered, unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent (eg, illness).
- Parents/caregivers must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student's non-attendance. Usually this comprises a telephone call and follow-up letter from a parent/caregiver; a medical certificate is required after three days or more of absence

- When a student is late for school, it is appropriate that the parent/caregiver explains the reason for lateness
- Parents/caregivers must let the school know if an extended absence is likely, or if the school needs to arrange work at home for students

**School’s responsibilities**

Schools must record attendance and absences at least half daily in order to:

- Meet legislative requirements
- Assist calculation of the school’s Student Resource Package (SRP) funding
- Enable our School Council to report on attendance annually

Schools must use only CASES21, Ecases21 or third party software which is compatible with CASES21 to record student attendance.

Parents/guardians are required to provide an explanation for their child’s absence from school.

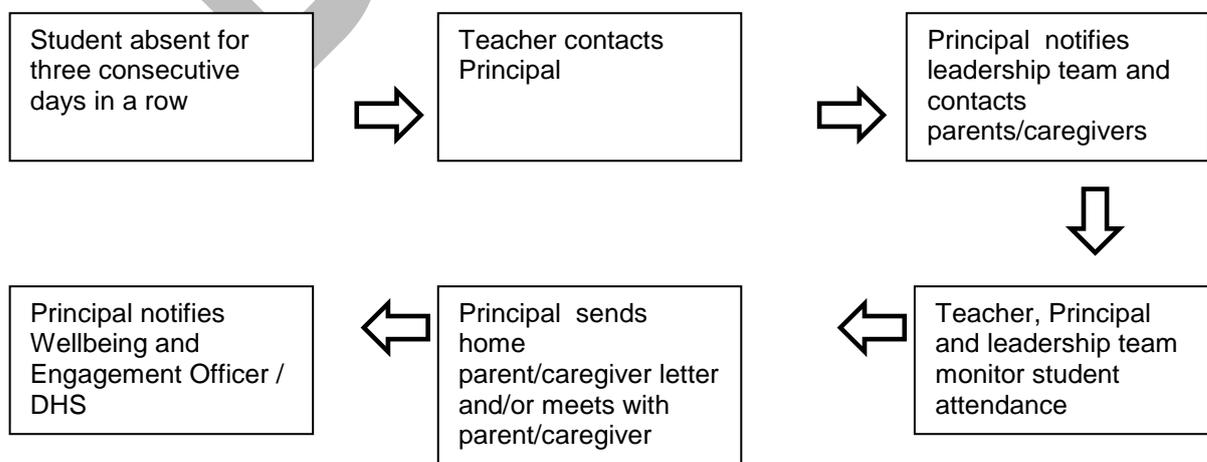
Schools must advise parents/guardians promptly of unexplained absences; this will be completed on a monthly basis. Ararat Primary School will issue individualised, cumulative student attendance reports to parents and guardians at the end of each term.

**Teachers’ responsibilities**

- Monitor each child’s daily attendance
- Record absences and reasons for absence in attendance folders and send to front office by 9.00am each morning
- Contact the Principal on the third consecutive day of absence. Record in notes section of attendance folder. Document any strategies/interventions and include in student’s file
- Other action: discuss with PLT leader / Leadership Team
- Co-ordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested

**Leadership team’s responsibilities**

- Ensure that rolls are accurately completed
- Complete letters regarding the absence of a student and send home to parent/caregiver
- Document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include in student’s file
- Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and principals should also advise approvals and non-approvals on school letterhead. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school files, together with applications, and are to be made available to appropriate department officers as required.



This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle, or as required, reflecting changes in DEECD policy.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in OCTOBER, 2014.

# ARARAT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

It has come to our attention that \_\_\_\_\_

- has been absent for the last \_\_\_\_\_ days
- has had ongoing attendance issues

We view this as a matter that can have quite serious effects on your child's education.

The DEECD clearly states that the absence of a child at school is the responsibility of his/her parents or guardian.

Any reason given for absences to the school may be investigated, and a medical certificate **must** be produced if requested.

If there are any queries do not hesitate to contact me.

Jennifer Molan  
Principal

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