

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction.

SUMMARY

- Parents/carers must enrol a child of compulsory school age, 6 to 17 years of age, at a registered school and ensure the child attends school.
- Government schools are required to have an Attendance Policy as part of their Student Engagement Policy.
- Schools must also record and monitor attendance and absences in order to meet the duty of care owed to students, as well as the requirements of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- For policy and guidance related to exemptions from attendance, refer to Exemption from School Attendance and Enrolment.

DETAILS

In accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#), schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years unless an exemption has been granted.

Parents/carers 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.

Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled, during normal school hours every day of each term, unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance or attendance and enrolment for the student, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

A principal or regional director (depending on the circumstances) may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance or attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduced to less than full time. Refer to the Exemption from School Attendance and Enrolment Policy for more information.

For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/carer must promptly provide an explanation on each occasion to the school. 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 (Vic). Schools must refer to the Guidelines for guidance on what constitutes a 'reasonable excuse'.

Schools must:

- have an Attendance Policy as part of their Student Engagement Policy
- maintain attendance records

- identify and follow up unexplained absences
- record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and in every class in secondary schools
- record, in writing, the reason given for each absence
- advise parents/carers of unexplained absences, as soon as practicable on the same day of the absence, including for post-compulsory aged students.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Schools must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and in every class in secondary schools and must record, in writing, the reason given for each absence. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge schools' duty of care for all students
- assist calculation of the school's funding
- enable school councils to report on student attendance annually
- meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) requirements (for VCE students).

All registered schools must ensure their system for recording student attendance meets the requirements above. Government schools must ensure attendance data is recorded in the DET System of Record. Schools using third party software must ensure that the software is compatible with the System of Record and are required to import attendance data on a monthly basis.

Schools that do not have current attendance data recorded in CASES21 will receive regular email notifications reminding them to import their data. Parents/carers are required to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school, and a principal must record in writing the reason (if any) given by the parent/carer.

All schools must report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community at least once a year.

SAME DAY NOTIFICATION OF UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES

Schools must advise parents/carers of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students.

REFERRAL TO A SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

When a principal feels that they have exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance and deems it appropriate to make a referral to a School Attendance Officer, they must adhere to the requirements set out in the International student program quality standards School Attendance Guidelines.