



Attendance Policy

Morningson Park Primary School 5040

POLICY DATE: February 2018

STATUS: Ratified by School Council 13th March 2018

“Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our schools actively promote the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards. Morningson Park Primary School’s (The school’s) Child Safety Code is available on the school’s website.”

Rationale:

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 sets out the basic legal requirements for attendance. In Victoria, young people between 6 and 17 years of age inclusive must be enrolled in a registered school or registered for home schooling in accordance with the Act and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 and 2013.

There is a legal requirement for schools to keep records of student attendance. All students are expected to attend on all designated school days unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent

Regular attendance at school enables students to maximise their full educational potential and to actively participate and engage in their learning. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. Students who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on fundamental aspects of their educational and social development.

Aims:

- To ensure that there are agreed processes for managing student absences at Morningson Park Primary School.
- To encourage parents, carers, students and school staff to work together to minimise absences.

Implementation:

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, are punctual and are only absent if ill or for any other valid reason
- Parents/carers of absent students are required to provide an explanation of the absence explaining why an absence has occurred.

- Where a student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months and
 - the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences
 - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and been unsuccessful, or are inappropriate in the circumstances,

Principals can exercise their discretion to refer the matter to a School Attendance Officer for further action.

- School Attendance Officers can then issue a School Attendance Notice to the parent giving the opportunity to provide a reasonable excuse for the absences or, where necessary, nominate the parent responsible for the absences. Failure to comply with this Notice may result in the issue of an Infringement Notice, which carries with it a penalty of approximately \$70.

- Parents/carers must ensure that if a student leaves early or arrives late, the student /and or parent must report to the Administration Office to be signed out, or in, and collect a Late Pass which they will take to their classroom teacher

- If a student is reluctant to attend school, parents/carers should contact their child's classroom teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal who may enlist the help of the other personnel in supporting the student's return to school

Responsibility of Mornington Park Primary School

- Mornington Park Primary School has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored

- The roll will be marked by classroom teachers at the commencement of each morning and afternoon on Sentral (school data system). This data is sent to the Department of Education and Training by the Administration Officer. Rolls will be marked at 9.15am and 2.00pm each day.

- If a student arrives late, the child/and or parent, carer will sign them in and the Administration Officer will issue them with a Late Pass and the office will adjust the roll. The teacher is to make sure the child has a late pass.

- Written notifications (letters) from parents or carers should be received, signed, dated and placed in the roll folder for collection and filing at the office. Staff are to advise parents to inform the office of any absences via phone before 9.15am or email to the school's email address.

- Where parents have notified the school via email or phone, the office staff will update class rolls.

- An SMS will automatically be sent by Sentral to the parents of children who have not arrived at school.

- Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in the organisation of a formal attendance meeting with the family to discuss attendance issues and support a satisfactory return to school
- The Principal may enlist the support of others such as the Assistant Principal, School Social Worker or other nominee in contacting the parents/carers of students with a high level of unexplained or unapproved absences
- The Principal will contact the Department of Education and Training, South Eastern Victoria Region should the absence of a student reach a level that places their learning at risk, and no reasonable explanation has been provided to the school and the child's attendance has not improved
- The school will notify parents/carers in writing of those days when students are not required to attend school
- The school will periodically remind parents/carers of their responsibilities in regards to attendance via the Principal's newsletter, assemblies, parent/carers information evenings and parent/carers-teacher meetings. They will be required to sign a copy of the Attendance Policy to indicate their understanding of and agreement with the Policy
- Student attendance and absence figures, plus the number of times late to school will appear on student's half yearly and end of year reports
- The Wellbeing team will review attendance data fortnightly

Responsibility of Students

- Students are expected to attend school every day and be punctual for all classes, programs, commitments and organised activities unless they have a valid reason to be absent
- Students must report to the Administration Office if they arrive late and take a late pass to the class teacher
- Students needing to leave school early must be signed out by their parent/carer at the Administration Office
- **Evaluation:** Department of Education and Training auditors will audit the school's attendance records each year. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or as necessary

Staged Response

1. Unexplained absence and worrying absence patterns identified. (Illness Attendance Improvement Plan. Holidays Student absence learning plan & application to the Principal. Refusal Return to school plan.)
2. Initial contact made with parent by the teacher.
3. Letter sent to the parent.
4. Attendance Meeting organised.
5. Individual Improvement plan developed.
6. Situation monitored and reviewed.
7. Student Support Group engaged
8. Referral to DET Regional Office.

