

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Aims

Analysis and review of school attendance has identified factors that facilitate effectiveness in engaging students in the learning curriculum and school community. Melton Specialist School aims to provide:

- a supportive and safe school environment;
- a curriculum that provides for all students;
- structures and approaches that facilitate the success of all students;
- effective record keeping;
- prompt follow-up of absences;
- close liaison with parents/caregivers;
- guidance and support for those with attendance problems;
- a cooperative community/interagency approach to the area.

### Rationale

As attendance is intrinsic to educational opportunity, the Department of Education and Training policy is that all students enrolled in government schools must attend on a full-time basis unless absent with the authority of the school. This policy acknowledges that attendance depends on active cooperation between the school, parents/caregivers and the student.

### Implementation

#### Parents:

Information will be clearly conveyed to parents that it is their obligation to inform the school of the reason for a student's absence. Parents will be encouraged to notify the school in advance of any absence, where practicable. Where there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a student, prompt communication will occur with the parents/guardians/caregivers. Parents of students will contact the school via 9743 4966. Legislation in Victoria allows for the prosecution of parents for the regular truancy of their children. A note or Doctor's Certificate needs to be provided after any absence to offer explanation why the student was absent. Students enrolled in a Vocational Educational Training course need to provide a certificate due to a set number of days for allowable absences.

#### Teachers:

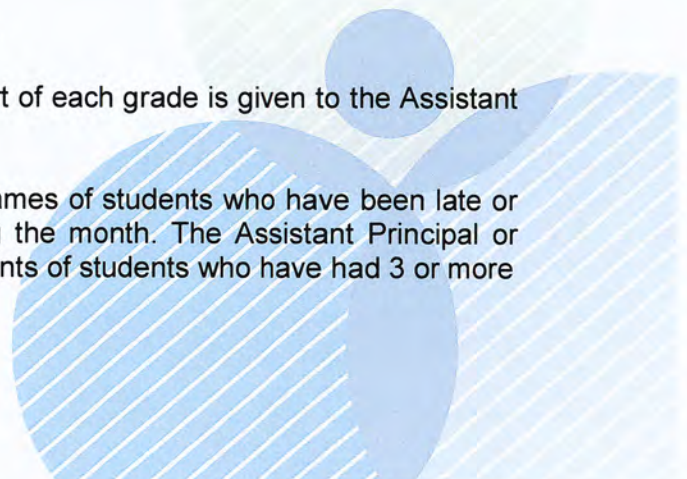
Will accurately mark rolls twice daily using Compass or the school's proforma and keep records (notes) of all absences, including lateness. Both the roll and notes are legal documents. Teachers to encourage students to bring notes to school explaining absences.

#### School:

Compass records and rolls are to be collected daily.

At the end of each month, a monthly summary report of each grade is given to the Assistant Principal or nominee for checking.

The Assistant Principal or nominee highlights the names of students who have been late or did not attend school for four or more days during the month. The Assistant Principal or nominee will send computer generated notes to parents of students who have had 3 or more



unexplained absences for the month. This will be done at the Assistant Principal's/nominee's discretion in consultation with the classroom teacher and Section Leader.

The Assistant Principal or nominee will contact the families either by phone or letter whose children's attendance is of concern.

All notes held by classroom teachers will be collected at the end of the school year and stored for 12 months in student files. Any anomalies with attendance records will be cross referenced with notes and update will be made.

Procedures:

Roll is to be marked twice daily both am. by (9:30) and pm. (1:30).

If students are absent then the classroom teacher is to inquire about the whereabouts of an individual. (A note signed or verbal from parent/guardian is required)

Student absences will be reported on students School Report.

**The following steps are to be followed if no reason is given for Absence:**

1. Contact with parents /guardian within 5 days of absence. (Phone or personal contact is acceptable.)

2. If the student's absence remains unresolved and ongoing after the initial contact, the school will convene a meeting with parents/guardians and the student (if appropriate). The purpose of the meeting is to:

- ensure parents are aware of absence and its implications.
- examine the reasons for non-attendance.
- identify whether further assistance will be needed.

Classroom teacher and Section Leader may be involved.

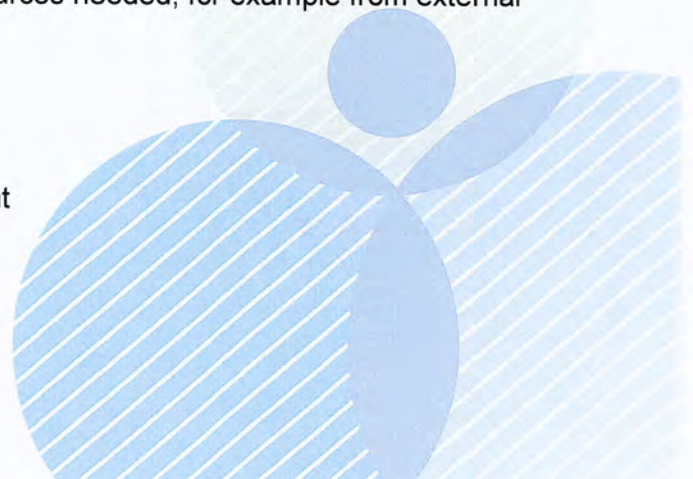
3. If communication with parents/guardians has not been possible or a meeting does not sufficiently resolve the attendance problem, a school plan will be developed to support the student's attendance.

Normally this will involve a formal meeting convened by the principal or nominee and attended by the parents/guardians, student (if appropriate) and a relevant teacher. The school may also seek support from regional student service support staff, community or other government agencies.

The school plan should result in the establishment of an ongoing attendance support process. This should develop and monitor an appropriate program of assistance and support for the student. It will draw upon any special skills and resources needed, for example from external support personnel.

The plan could involve such action as:

- modification of the curriculum
- increased supervision of the student
- personal support and counselling for the student
- referral to other support agencies.



It is important that wherever possible, the plan is developed in consultation with the parents/guardians and the student to ensure their active cooperation. The plan should be documented to confirm arrangements to assist the student.

Where the action taken through the school plan does not lead to a resumption of satisfactory attendance, the principal or nominee should determine if it is necessary to external support agencies in the interest of the education of the student.

Evaluation and review of this policy within the school environment will include yearly:

- Analysis of Attendance Records
- Student Absence trends in the Annual General Report

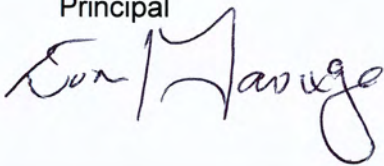
#### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

#### **Certification**

This policy was endorsed by school council at the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

Principal



School Council President

