

HAMILTON NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Hamilton North Primary School Statement

Hamilton North Primary School at all times will fully comply with Departmental management and the associated Guidelines published and amended by the Department from time to time.

Rationale

Under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, schooling is compulsory for children of school age (six to seventeen years) resident in Victoria. They required to be in full-time attendance at a registered school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.

Aims

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or unauthorised absences.

Implementation

Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find ‘catching up’ difficult.

Daily school attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don’t fall behind both socially and developmentally.

Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.

School participation is important as it maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks.

School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

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.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents are required to ensure their child attends school and to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school, and the principal must record in writing the reason (if any) given by the parent. The principal must be able to determine from the records if the excuse given was reasonable in terms of the parent meeting their legal obligations.

Parents should promptly inform the school of the reason for their child's absence so that the school can:

- determine if the child's absence needs to be excused by the principal, in line with school policy and these guidelines
- determine the appropriate follow up to ensure the child's education and wellbeing is supported
- record if the parent has a reasonable excuse for not meeting their obligation to ensure their child attends school each day.

Where possible, parents should inform the school in advance of upcoming absences.

To ensure a child's education and wellbeing are supported, parents are encouraged to communicate openly with the school where a child has an ongoing medical condition that may result in ongoing absences or medical appointments during school hours.

Parents/guardians have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the school before 9am prior to classes commencing each morning regarding their child's absence for that day.
- Parents/guardians are required to inform the school of a child's absence by 9am on the first day of absence by phone or text. When this is not done a representative of the school will contact parents/guardians to ascertain the reason for absence.
- The information is recorded on the school's daily absence notes and distributed to class teachers by administration staff.
- Parents need to phone or text the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
- A Compulsory Attendance Advice Letter new for letter ST21326 has been provided in CASES21 to advise parents that absences have been recorded without a reasonable excuse and the potential consequences if they have repeated absences recorded without a reasonable excuse.
- Students arriving after 9:00am or leaving early from school are to be recorded by the Parents/guardians in the Sign in/out register (see Appendix B).

School Responsibility

The school must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and 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 the school governing body (school council in government schools) to report on student attendance annually

All registered schools must ensure their system for recording student attendance meets the requirements above. Government schools must use only CASES21, eCASES21 or third party software which is compatible with CASES21 to record student attendance.

Accurate and comprehensive student attendance records, including the reasons for any absences, also allow schools to monitor the effectiveness of attendance improvement strategies and measure achievement against attendance targets. It also provides evidence for any further enforcement proceedings including issue of an Infringement Notice (and any appeal) and court proceedings if it appears a parent may not have met their legal obligations

to ensure their child attends school.

All schools must report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community at least once a year. Schools are also required to report information about student enrolment and attendance for funding requirements.

The Department collects information on student attendance through extraction of data from CASES21 and publishes attendance rates in its annual report.

For the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the enforcement system, the Department will collect information about the use of School Attendance Notices and School Enrolment Notices.

- The principal (student attendance officer or delegated nominee) has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- Hamilton North Primary will manage student absences and parent responsibilities in line with DET guidelines issued to schools in January 2018.
- All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, and are aggregated on our CASES21 database and communicated to the DET.
- The student attendance officer will prove attendance reports to the principal and class teachers on a weekly basis.
- Posters encouraging school attendance will feature prominently, as well as newsletter articles.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the DET and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.
- The DET and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The principal, teacher or administrator will contact the parents/guardians of unexplained or unapproved absences to ascertain the reasons and offer support for the family on the first morning of absence.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance may result in a formal attendance conference being organised.
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported to the Regional Director as per DET Guidelines 2018.

Appendix A

<p>Absence Note</p> <p>Name: _____ Grade: _____</p> <p>was absent on _____ (date/s)</p> <p>Reason: Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Dentist appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Family Holiday <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ _____</p>	<p>Absence Note</p> <p>Name: _____ Grade: _____</p> <p>was absent on _____ (date/s)</p> <p>Reason: Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Dentist appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Family Holiday <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ _____</p>
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Appendix B

HAMILTON
NORTH
PRIMARY SCHOOL

SIGN IN/OUT REGISTER

Date: _____ Student name/s: _____

<i>✓ Please tick one</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Late arrival		
Early departure		
Medical/Dental Appointment	Departure time:	Return time:

Signed: _____

Office: _____

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SIGN IN/OUT REGISTER

Date: _____ Student name/s: _____

<i>✓ Please tick one</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Late arrival		
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Date: _____ Student name/s: _____

<i>✓ Please tick one</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Reason</i>
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Signed: _____

Office: _____

Office Use Only	
Issue Date	June 2018
Last Review Date	August 2018
Next Review Date	August 2021