



*Small School Big Learning*

## Attendance policy

### Rationale:

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

### Aims:

Yering Primary School aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that all children required to attend school do so regularly, without unnecessary or frivolous 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.
- Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.
- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence - shopping excursions or birthday parties are not.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill, or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a further responsibility to telephone/text the school explaining why an absence has occurred. If the absence is more than one day, a written note must be provided.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our CASES database and communicated to the DET. This is necessary to:
  - meet legislative requirements
  - enable school councils to report on student attendance annually
  - discharge schools' duty of care for all students while not at school
- It is expected that class teachers will follow up the absences of students in their grade. This includes:
  - Call/text a parent/ guardian if a student is absent.
  - Call a parent/ guardian requesting a medical certificate, if the child has an absentee issue.
  - Report to the principal if contact cannot be made.
  - Report to the principal if the absence is repeated or is greater than a week.

- 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 will also ensure parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences are contacted, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.
- 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 Department of Health and Human Services.
- Posters encouraging school attendance will feature prominently, as well as newsletter articles, highlighting 100% monthly attendance.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and Training, and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

**Resources:**

DET School Policy & Advisory Guide:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>