

## ***Altona Green Primary School No.5287***

# **Attendance Policy**

### **Rationale**

The main reasons for absences are sickness – it is vital that students are only away on the day they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference. It is vital that holidays are planned during school holidays avoid where possible during the term. Think twice before letting your child have a 'day off' as they could fall behind their classmates – **Every Day Counts**

### **Aims:**

- To maximise learning opportunities by ensuring absenteeism is kept to a minimum
- To put into place agreed processes for managing absenteeism in the school
- To create a culture that views being punctual as important
- To create a culture that views 'every day counts'
- To build trusting relationships between the school and home
- To have high expectations of student attendance

### **Implementation**

- All enrolled students are expected to attend all day, every day in the school year.
- Class teachers will mark the role electronically at 9.00am and 2.30pm each day.
- Late arrivals will either enter via the office before going to class after 9.00am.
- Attendance records will be entered into the school's staff administration system (CASES21) daily.
- Attendance, absence records and late arrivals will form part of the child's half year and end of year progress reports to parents.
- Parents of absent students are required to provide a written note, a phone call or email detailing the reasons for the absence. Any written notes are to be sent to the office for recording on CASES21 and then stored in office archives according to DEECD regulations.
- After initial follow up by the class teacher, staff are to bring to the attention of the Assistant Principal any student whose attendance is irregular, any students who do not provide written notes or whose absences appear unwarranted.
- The Assistant Principal in consultation with the class teacher and using the attendance records will decide upon a strategy to be employed. Some of these strategies may include:
  - Initial telephone contact with parents
  - Counselling for students or parents
  - Formal attendance meeting
  - Attendance reward charts
  - Home visits
  - Student Attendance Officer involvement

- The School Attendance Policy is based around the “Every Day Counts” program and information distributed to students and families.
- Ongoing attendance issues will be reported by the Principal or Assistant Principal to the appropriate welfare and government agencies eg. Child Protection, Child First

### **Altona Green Primary School Attendance Procedures:**

Consistent student attendance at Altona Green Primary School is an expectation that relies heavily on school support. The following procedures provide guidelines which give clear strategies to encourage maximum attendance

1. The Altona Green Primary School “Attendance Policy” shall be strictly adhered to and shall be distributed at the beginning of the year to incoming Prep students and other new students as they arrive at the school.
2. The Assistant Principal will monitor children considered vulnerable to excessive absences and details will be distributed to class teachers at the beginning of the year.
3. Parents are requested to ring the school prior to 9.00am if their child is not attending school for the day.
4. Parents of children absent for more than 3 days without an explanation will be contacted by the Assistant Principal.
5. Individual student attendance plans shall be put into place for children who experience excessive absence traits. These may include
  - Home visits
  - Revised school teaching plans
  - Counselling and support groups
  - Correspondence detailing the school’s policy and the Education Act requirements of parents
  - Regional notification and support
  - When appropriate, outside services may be sourced to support attendance eg. Child First
  - Involvement of the School Attendance Officer
6. Regular Staff meeting briefings and professional learning around attendance will occur.
7. Class teachers to be alert and follow up absences initially before informing Assistant Principal.
8. Regular newsletter items using attendance data to look at trends across the school – rewards given as appropriate to students.
9. When appropriate highlight positive attendance data (low non-approved absences) by a class/cohort at assemblies.
10. Inform parents through the newsletter on current research that links attendance with student achievement.
11. Prior notification of extended holidays to be given to the class teacher with an expectation from the school that the negotiated school work is supported whilst the child is away.
12. In general Principals would excuse an absence for
  - Medical or dental appointment where out of hours appointments are not possible
  - Bereavement of attendance at a funeral

- School refusal if a plan is in place to parents to address concerns
- Cultural Observations if the parent notifies schools in advance
- Family holidays where the parent notifies the in advance and completes a student absence-learning plan agreed by the school and the parent.

In general, principals would not be expected to excuse absences where:

- Approval has not been sought in advance or in accordance of the school policy
- The student was absent due to participating in leisure activities or social activities without approval
- The parent has provided no explanation for the absences
- The conditions of approval have not been met

**\*Approved absence:** is when the school is provided with written or verbal contact detailing the reasons for student absence. Altona Green's office number is 9360-0777, email address is [altona.green.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:altona.green.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au).

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle

Endorsed by School Council: September 2014

Mark roll twice daily

Absences to be entered twice daily into Cases21 by classroom teacher or on a hard copy of the roll which is to be sent to the office.

Student absence/lateness- parent approval required in the form of a note/email or phone call  
Query from teacher about patterns taken to AP and for follow up in completing Absence

AP access absence/late data from CASES - reports and Late Book

### Student Absence/Lateness Action Sequence

Individual Action

Whole School Action

- Phone Call
- Letter sent home with data attendance charts and stickers. Catch up work sent home (long term)
- Survey children as to why they are late/parent survey
- Brochure sent home - It's Not OK to be Away or It's Not Great to be Late
- Support from GO/Social worker
- Home Visit

AP/teacher

AP

Teacher

AP

- Display poster around school promoting school attendance - It's Not OK to be Away

- Review of classroom practice/engaging activities/routines to encourage punctuality/attendance.

- Targets set—what data do we use and how often do we collect it?

- Teacher expectations

- Staff punctuality /attendance

- Newsletter item - attendance profile

- Assembly - attendance reports linked to targets

Teacher/AP

Staff

Teachers