ATTENDANCE POLICY

Background

Children between 6 years and 16 years are required by law under the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* to attend school. In addition, since 2009 the Compulsory Education Legislation requires all young people between the ages of 16 and 17 to participate in a full-time approved learning program. Students must attend the school on every day instruction is provided at the school for the child unless an exemption has been granted by the Minister. To gain maximum benefit from school students need to attend regularly. Parents and carers have primary responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. The school is responsible for recording and monitoring attendance and for taking appropriate action in cases of non-attendance or frequent absences.

Student Absences

1. **Recording student absences**
   Attendance is recorded electronically in Daymap by teachers every lesson. Specific codes are used to identify the different reasons why students may be absent. Daymap attendance data is regularly exported to EDSAS.

2. **Reporting absence reasons**
   Parents are asked to notify the school of absences beforehand and provide a reason for the absence. Planned whole- or part-day absences can be reported by writing a note to the home group teacher and sending it to school with the student. Absences can also be reported by:
   - By phoning the school on 8562 2022 and selecting option 1 or 2 on the menu
   - By creating a new Daymap message and selecting the option *Send an absence notification to the school*

   Absences notified by phone or Daymap will be recorded in Daymap by an SSO.

   Absences of five or more days due to illness require a medical certificate.

3. **Absence notifications for parents and caregivers**
   To support regular attendance, parents/caregivers are notified by mobile phone Short Message Service (SMS) each time their student is away from school without explanation. An SMS text message is sent to the mobile phones of parents/caregivers explaining that our records show that their student is absent unexplained on that day.

   Parents/caregivers can then reply on the day they receive the message by pressing the reply option on their phone. The reply should include:
   - Student's name
   - Student's year level
   - Date of absence and,
   - Reason for absence

Standard text abbreviations are acceptable for the reply, as long as the school receives the key information.

The numbers used for these text messages are temporary and are randomly generated and replies will not reach the school if send more than 24 hours after the original message. Absences can be explained by phone, Daymap message or written note if more than 24 hours has elapsed since the SMS was sent.

4. Part-day absences

4.1 Recording student lateness

Students who are late to school must report to Student Support and sign in. Parents/caregivers are required to provide an explanation of the lateness by one of the methods listed above.

4.2 Leaving school during the day

Students leaving school early must sign out at Student Support. Parents/caregivers are required to provide an explanation of the early departure by one of the methods listed above. Students who wish to leave school due to illness must report to Student Support where an SSO will contact a parent/caregiver for approval and to arrange for the student to be collected and record the absence in Daymap.

5. Extended absences

A parent/caregiver must apply for an exemption from school attendance if they wish to take their child out of school temporarily. Temporary exemption from attendance at school is often sought because of:

- Family travel or holidays
- Medical or health reasons

Parents/caregivers seeking exemption should contact the school to obtain the exemption request form. This form must be completed and returned to the front office for the necessary approvals. The parent/caregiver will be notified once approval has been given and an SSO will record the absence in Daymap. Approval needs to be obtained before the period of absence begins.

6. Monitoring attendance

Home group teachers, year level managers and senior leaders monitor attendance with the aim of obtaining explanations for all absences, minimising the total number of absences and reducing the number of habitual non-attending and chronic non-attending students (5-9 days absent or 10 or more days absent per term, respectively).

- Home group teachers attempt contact with a parent/caregiver after three day's unexplained absence

- Home group teachers liaise with year level managers and/or senior leaders when unable to contact a parent/caregiver following unexplained absences or when concerned about excessive absences

- Year level managers and senior leaders follow up habitual and chronic non-attending students by liaising with parents/caregivers and members of the wellbeing team

- Senior leaders refer to Department for Education support services when chronic non-attendance is not improved by strategies initiated by the school

- A home visit arranged if a student has not been sighted for two weeks.

Last updated	Next review
2018	

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2018	