



SHERBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

PURPOSE

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted.

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. Children and young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes across their lives. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age.

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.

This policy provides the framework to a whole-school approach to the engagement of students in their learning and school life.

It is to be read in conjunction with:

- *The school's Engagement and Inclusion Policy* DEECD example policy available [here](#)
- *The school's Staged Response to non-attendance* (insert school's hyperlinked document)
- [DEECD School Attendance Guidelines 2014](#)
- [DEECD Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance 2014](#)

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

Sherbourne Primary School

- is committed to promoting the key messages of the benefits of regular school attendance
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- successful students are well organised and start the day on time
- believes that it is in the best interest of students that family holidays/shopping trips/medical appointments are scheduled outside of school hours
- monitors, communicates and implements whole school strategies to improve regular school attendance
- is aware that chronic absenteeism is commonly a sign of stress factors in a student's life outside and/or in the immediate learning environment. Our staged response to non-attendance allows us to respond quickly and work in partnership with students and their families
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

POLICY

THE FOLLOWING ARE WAYS IN WHICH WE PROMOTE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

Attendance practices reflect DET guidelines;

- Student Attendance and Educational Outcomes: Every Day Counts and
- School Attendance Guidelines 2014.

Whole School Strategies

- regularly communicating with parents about expectations for attendance
- promoting awareness that absence results in quantifiable lost learning time and opportunities
- modelling punctuality across the whole school

Create Safe, Supportive Learning Environments Where All Students Experience Success Through Active Participation and Engagement In Purposeful Learning by:

- developing collaborative and empowering relationships between teachers, students and parents
- implementing effective and supportive transition programs, including student transitions between different learning areas and levels within the school, and pathways and careers support programs
- developing class and home group structures and environments that enable opportunities for increased connectedness to individual teachers and peers
- encouraging parents to get involved in the life of the school
- immediately following up any problems identified by students and parents in a transparent manner

Implement Consistent, Rigorous Procedures to Monitor and Record Student Absence by:

- recording attendance/lateness twice a day, once each for the morning and afternoon session
- promptly following-up individual student absences
- correctly using student attendance data management systems (e.g. Compass, eCASES)
- The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences/lateness, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences
- Ongoing unexplained absences/lateness, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised
- All absence notes and records of communication will be retained and stored at the school for a minimum period of 12 months
- Student attendance figures will appear on the student's mid-year and end of year reports

When Following Up Individual Student Absences,

- further investigate the reasons for the student's absence (the actual reason may differ to the explanation initially provided)
- organise a meeting with the parent and a relevant teacher or other staff member at the earliest opportunity to identify the issues related to the non-attendance and to plan for improvement
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services.
- Access specialist support for individual students with identified behavioural, health, or social issues by utilising Student Support Services or external community services where appropriate

RESPONSIBILITIES

Class Teacher responsibilities:

- monitor each student's attendance and punctuality/contact parents if absence is unexplained/request attendance letter from CASES be sent to parents/ Record actions
- Address attendance/punctuality concerns early through an attendance/punctuality action plan
- Make DHS/ChildFIRST notifications where appropriate and in consultation with school leadership

Student responsibilities:

- Attend school every school day
- Arrive at school and classes on time and prepared

Parent responsibilities:

- Ensure student attends school every school when instruction is offered
- Ensure student arrives at school between 8.40 and 8.55am
- Record absences on Compass.
- Provide the school with advanced notice if there is a planned up-coming school absence
- Communicate openly with the school about a student's ongoing medical condition that may result in ongoing absence or medical appointments during school hours
- Alert the school early to issues that may impact on a student's attendance
- Work in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns

Principal/Principal Nominee/School Leadership responsibilities: E.g.

- Record student attendance on Compass.
- Ensure student attendance is recorded twice per day (*primary school*) and reason given for each absence is recoded in writing
- Follow up unexplained absence on the day of absence.
- Report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community at least once a year

STRATEGIES

At *Sherbourne Primary School* we promote 100% attendance at an individual level by promoting the link between attendance, student achievement and student wellbeing.

RESPONSES TO ABSENCES

At *Sherbourne Primary School*, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance- at or above state mean of attendance at each grade level and at or above the mean attendance of like schools.

REPORTING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

At *Sherbourne Primary School* reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways by entering on Compass providing a valid reason.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was endorsed by School Council	June 2018
Due for review:	June 2019