



# **Flemington Primary School**

## **POLICY FOLDER**

### **Student Wellbeing**

### **Attendance Policy & Procedure for the Management of Attendance Data**

#### **Overview**

Flemington Primary School endeavours to promote a culture of attendance, where all students are encouraged to attend school at all possible times and at the correct time, ready to start school, with the exception of illness. All staff will work collaboratively towards establishing effective management of student absence data, so as to monitor and support students' and families' educational, social and emotional development and achieve positive outcomes for all children.

The management of attendance at Flemington Primary School reflects government initiatives regarding attendance and uses tools and guidelines (such as those provided through CASES 21) in their management of attendance data. A culture of attendance is to be encouraged within the school community through positive communication and with an emphasis on engaging all those within the school community in the culture of the school.

Using the "It's Not Okay to be Away" program, the school seeks to establish links within the school community via the Principal or Assistant Principal to support identified 'at risk' students.

#### **Principles**

- Student absences, as well as late and early arrivals to school and the monitoring of attendance data is a shared responsibility between classroom teachers, specialist teachers, administrative staff and parents.
- Effective communication between classroom teachers, specialist teachers, administrative staff, members of the Welfare Committee and parents is encouraged so as to ensure that student absences are managed effectively.
- All individuals within the school environment are to be encouraged to be involved in the wider school community so as to establish a network of support for those in need.
- A culture of acceptance is to be encouraged where all individuals within the school community are to be valued and respected for their individual differences.

#### **Aims**

- To develop a culture of attendance at Flemington Primary School.
- To ensure a minimum of 80% attendance for all students within the school.
- To ensure all students arrive at school at the appropriate time and stay in class for the entire day at all possible times.
- For classroom teachers, specialist teachers and administrative staff to use a consistent approach to the management of absence/ late and early arrival data.
- To maintain accurate records of attendance using DEECD tools and guidelines
- To act promptly on unexplained absences

- To ensure regular student absences are monitored and explained
- To identify students who may be 'at risk' due to poor attendance at school
- To identify any reasons why students with poor attendance records are absent and put in place measures to support families and engage students and their parents in the school community

## **Guidelines**

### **Procedure for marking the roll**

- All staff to mark the roll first thing in the morning (approx 9:00am) and first thing after lunch break (approx 2:30pm).
- Staff to send their class roll to each specialist class, to be marked if the class begins at 9:00 or 2:30pm.
- Student attendance to be marked with an / (am and pm).
- Student absences to be marked with an 0 (am and pm).
- Staff to forward their class' weekly absence report to the office on the Monday of the week after it has been taken.
- Latecomers to be identified with an L at the time of arrival.

## **Approved and Unapproved Absences**

The following constitute an **approved** absence;

- A written explanation of the child's absence from a parent/guardian (Mark N on roll above absence)
- A phone call from a parent/guardian explaining the child's absence (Mark P on roll above absence)
- A verbal report from parent to the teacher about the child's absence (mark V on roll above absence)

## **Definition of codes used on absence report**

Teachers should record the following codes if;

- **111 Late** – the child is not present when roll is taken in the morning
- **112 Early Departure** – the child has left school prior to the roll being taken in the afternoon
- **200 – Medical/Specialist appointment** - - a verbal, phone or written explanation of the child's appointment has been provided to the classroom teacher by the child's parents/guardians
- **201 – Illness** - a verbal, phone or written explanation of the child's illness has been provided to the classroom teacher by the child's parents/guardians
- **500 – Unexplained** - no explanation of the child's absence has been provided to the classroom teacher by the child's parents/guardians

- **800- Parent choice** – A short **non-medical** period of absence (up to 1 week) with a written, phone or verbal explanation provided to the classroom teacher by the child's parents/guardians
- **600- Educational** – If a child attends an educational program (such as Somers Camp or Gateways or visits to other schools) during school hours
- **606 - Camp-** Children are to be marked present on the morning prior to going to camp. The roll is not taken on camp.
- **804 – Extended Family Holiday** – a long period of absence (greater than 1 week) with written explanation provided to the classroom teacher
- **805 – Religious /Cultural Observance** - a verbal, phone or written explanation of the child's participation in such events has been provided to the classroom teacher by the child's parents/guardians

## **Roles and responsibilities regarding attendance**

### *The classroom teacher*

- Ensure the roll is taken twice daily at the specified times.
- Maintaining clear and accurate records of attendance in line with the Flemington Primary School's attendance policy procedure and DEECD accountability requirements.
- Ensure the specialist teachers receive the classroom roll when specialist classes are held at 9:00am or 2:30pm.
- Ensure weekly absence report is completed and promptly returned to the office.
- **Send home an absence note (provided by administration) to relevant children.**
- Contact parents if a child is absent for **3 consecutive days** or more, or **regularly absent on a particular day**. Teachers are then to inform the school Principal or Assistant Principal regarding reasons to allow follow up and support if necessary in these cases.
- Inform the school Principal or Assistant Principal of excessive absences.
- To store documentation such as absence notes, late and early leavers notices with their classroom roll.

### *Administrative staff*

- Provide teachers with monthly rolls and weekly absence reports
- Manage and record information provided by classroom teachers on school based data program (CASES 21)
- Provide teachers with templates for unexplained absences from CASES 21
- Provide classroom teachers with collated data on attendance at the end of each term and for report writing purposes
- Follow-up long periods on absence with parents by following guidelines and procedures established by DEECD.
- Include articles on absenteeism and the importance of regular attendance in the school newsletter.

- Provide each family with blank Student Absence Notes to allow for easy absence explanation ( translations available for some languages)
- To collect documentation such as absence notes, late and early leavers notices at the end of each year and store appropriately as per DEECD guideline.

### *Specialist teachers*

- Take the classroom roll for classes beginning at 9:00am and 2:30pm
- Record late arrivals on the roll when students arrive during the specialist class.
- Communicate with classroom teachers regarding absences, late or early arrivals where necessary.
- Immediately notify administrative staff if a child is absent at their session but has been marked as present earlier by the classroom teacher.

### **Accountability**

Student Attendance Data is to be reported on in the School Annual Report and is an indicator of academic engagement and progress. Students at Risk are to be tracked using the DEECD Students at Risk Mapping Tool.

*Referred to the School Council Policy Sub Committee for ratification – June 2008*