

### PURPOSE

- To ensure all students maximise their daily school attendance, achieving greater than 90% attendance rate each school year

### POLICY GUIDELINES

- Schooling is compulsory for students aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted;
- Daily school attendance is important for all students to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally;
- School participation is important as it maximises life opportunities for children 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;
- Student attendance will be actively promoted with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) expectation of a >90% attendance rate to be attained at KEPS by all students;
- All students should be punctual each day so that they don't lose valuable learning time and opportunities;
- Whilst ensuring student attendance at school is a legal obligation of parents, supporting students to attend school each day is the shared responsibility of all parents, students, the school and the wider community;
- Schools are required to implement school attendance procedures such as recording, excusing, monitoring and following up student attendance in order to meet the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007* and *Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013*;
- Parents should provide an explanation (written or verbal) as to the reason for their child's absence so that the school can:
  - determine if the child's absence needs to be excused by the principal, in line with school policy and DEECD *School Attendance Guidelines, 2014*; and
  - determine the appropriate follow up to ensure the child's education and wellbeing is supported;
- Where possible, parents should inform the school in advance of upcoming absences;
- Teachers must record the reason (if any) given by the parent. If the school is not notified of the reason for a student's absence then the absence will be recorded as an 'unexplained' reason (code 500);
- Student absence approval will be given by the principal, if the school is informed in advance by a parent for:
  - Family holidays;
  - Cultural observance;
  - Special events such as sporting;
  - Employment in the entertainment industry; and
  - Bereavement such as death family member or friend and or attendance at a funeral.
- Reasonable excuses which do not require advanced notice for principal approval are:
  - Illness or accident;
  - Medical or dental appointment if appointment cannot be scheduled outside school hours;
  - Attending or observing a religious event or obligation;
- A student absence for the purposes of shopping, birthdays, visiting relatives or for leisure/social activities will not be approved and will be recorded as a parent choice and an unapproved absence when the class teacher marks the daily roll;

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- All schools must report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community via the Annual Report;
- Schools are also required to report information about student enrolment and attendance for funding requirements to DEECD;
- DEECD collects information on student attendance data from CASES21 and publishes attendance rates on the My School site;
- Principals can consider the excuse given for an absence and use their discretion to decide if the parent has a reasonable excuse for not meeting their legal obligations ('excused absence') or does not have a reasonable excuse ('unexcused absence');
- Parents of a student, who has repeated absences without a reasonable excuse or explanation, may be issued with a School Attendance Notice from a DEECD School Attendance Officer;
- The school will actively pursue whole school strategies to support student attendance and punctuality by:
  - providing a safe and supportive learning environment where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning;
  - developing collaborative and empowering relationships between teachers, students and parents;
  - implementing effective and supportive transition programs, including Foundation transition, student transitions between different levels within the school and Year 6-7 transition;
  - developing class 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;
  - regularly monitoring and analysing school attendance and lateness data; and
  - provide early identification of and supportive intervention for students at risk of poor attendance and or punctuality by understanding the causal factors of absence or lateness and the need for targeted interventions, including utilising Student Support Services or external community services where appropriate.

### Documents

- DEECD, School Attendance Guidelines 2014;
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006, Education; and*
- *Training Reform Regulations 2007 and Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013.*

### POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- Class teachers will record student attendance electronically, twice a day at commencement of the school day in session 1 and immediately after the lunch recess, in session 5;
- In the case of casual replacement teachers (CRTs) hard copy attendance slips will be sent to the office in session 1 and 5 so that office staff can record attendances;
- Teachers will record absences against DEECD absence codes which will be classified as either approved or not approved absence, depending on the reason given for a student's absence;
- Parents are required to provide either verbal or written reasons for absences either via email, note, and phone message or in person. In some instances, parents must inform the school of a student's pending absence so that approval can be given. (see policy guidelines above);
- If students are absent for 3 consecutive days without any parent notification, class teachers will contact parents to seek an explanation;
- In the case of school organised, offsite, extra curriculum activities such as district athletics, band performances, camps and excursions, students are deemed in be in attendance if attending these activities;

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- If parents have notified the school in advance of family holiday which takes place during term, a student learning plan, if required, can be negotiated with the class teacher;
- School attendance, lateness and early dismissal data will be regularly monitored by staff and analysed to identify student absence patterns on a school, class and individual basis;
- The office will print out student absence reports twice a term (mid and end of term);
- Student written reports (mid-year and end of year) will record the number of days absent, late arrivals and early dismissals;
- If student absences exceed more than 5 days in a term or if attendance is lower than 90% for any given term, regardless if absences are approved or not, the Principal or Assistant Principal will make contact with parents, if the absence is having an adverse effect on a student's educational achievement and or development;
- Students with significance absences will be supported by the school with attendance strategies. These strategies will be developed on a case by case basis, in conjunction with the parent, teacher and Assistant Principal; and
- A DEECD regional Attendance Officer may issue a School Attendance Notice if a student has been absent for at least 5 days in the previous 12 months and a parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for the absences. If a satisfactory response is not received in response to a school Attendance Notice, an Infringement Notice may be issue by DEECD.

### School Lateness/Early Dismissal

- Students arriving late for school must be signed in at the office in the late book by a parent or a parent nominated person. The parent then must take the late student and the late slip to the classroom; and
- Students leaving early must be signed out in the office by a parent or other authorised person nominated by the parent.

### EVALAUTION

- This policy will be reviewed on a cyclical basis in accordance with the School Council policy review schedule or as required by school council.

Policy Area:  
Management

Ratified School Council:  
October 2014

Next Review: 2018