



# Williamstown Primary School

## Attendance Policy

### 1. BACKGROUND

Parents/guardians must enrol a child of compulsory school-age at a school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction or seek enrolment for other approved tuition.

Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled during normal school hours every day of each term. A Principal or Regional Director (depending on the circumstances) may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance to be exempt or reduced to less than full time.

For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/guardian must provide an explanation on each occasion and the school will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purpose of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

Schools must maintain attendance records and develop policies to support and maintain attendance. Exemptions from school attendance may be granted in some circumstances. All applications for exemptions are considered on a case by case basis, with the child's best interests as the guiding principle for decision-making. In making a decision the potential benefits or negative consequences of granting the exemption to the child's educational progress, wellbeing and development are also considered.

### 2. PURPOSE

- To ensure students of school age are enrolled and attend every day the school is open for instruction.
- To ensure Williamstown Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines and the legislative requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.
- To discharge the school's duty of care for all students.
- To assist in the calculation of the school's Student Resource Package (SRP) funding
- To enable the school to report on attendance annually through the Annual Report to the School Community.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

"School" means Williamstown Primary School.

### 4. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Students are expected to attend school every day during normal school hours unless there is an approved exemption.
- The school will record attendance and absences at least half daily. This may be by an electronic roll marking system.
- The school will use COMPASS to record student attendance.
- Parents/guardians are required to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school. This must be completed as soon as practicable on the day of the absence.
- Where a student is noted as absent but it has not received a parental explanation for the absence, the school will notify the parent/carer as soon as practicable on the day of the absence. This will be via email, phone call or SMS. The School requires parents to respond to this notification by phoning the School or logging the reason for the absence through Compass, on the day of the absence.
- The school will record in writing the reason (if any) given by the parent/guardian.
- The school will use "Every minute counts" or similar strategies to encourage regular and timely attendance.
- The school will develop a strategy for immediately following up with families when unexplained absences exceed a set number of days.
- Poor or irregular attendance, particularly unexplained attendance will be a matter to be addressed by the Leadership team in the school.
- The school will develop strategies to support those families encountering difficult circumstances resulting in poor or irregular student attendance.

- The student's absences will be recorded on the Student Report Card.
- Please refer also to the school's *Student Engagement Policy, Reporting to Parents Policy, Annual Report to the School Community Policy* and the *Duty of Care Policy*.
- Please refer also to DET's webpage below regarding exemption from attendance.
- Reference:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/attendance.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/attendance.aspx)

#### 5. REVIEW AND POLICY HISTORY

This policy is due for formal review in May 2021 although it may be changed at any time as required after approval by School Council and the Principal or if guidelines change (latest DET update early May 2018).

#### Policy History

Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
March 2015	New Policy
May 2018	DET Update Policy