

St Philip's Blackburn North



ATTENDANCE POLICY

VISION AND MISSION

Vision Statement

**Modelling the teachings of Christ,
St Philip's School community aspires to be a place of welcome that provides many learning environments to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.**

Mission Statements

Because we believe that Christ is the central focus of our school and we are witnesses to him and his teachings we aim to:

- provide an atmosphere where all are made welcome, where they feel safe and have a sense of belonging
- provide a school environment that is positive and challenges all students to work to the best of their ability
- foster in all a realisation that they are responsible for their own learning
- develop a sense of justice by respecting the opinions and rights of others
- encourage all to be sensitive to others and respect their differences
- encourage all to use their physical environments in a respectful manner
- provide a learning environment that utilises the most effective and current approaches in education.

RATIONALE

The Education Act 2013 requires that children of school age (six-seventeen years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.

Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students will miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find "catching up" difficult and therefore absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government reviewed student attendance guidelines in Victorian schools at the end of 2017. As a result of this review a revised set of attendance guidelines has been produced. Resulting changes to the guidelines state: 'schools must advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, **on the same day**, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students'. Full implementation of the new attendance guidelines by all Victorian schools came into effect at the end of Term 2, 2018. The attendance/notification changes are designed to help ensure the safety of school-aged children during school hours and that schools are supported in their duty of care obligations.

AIM

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly and without unnecessary absences.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent/Guardian

- At St Philip's Primary School we require parents/guardians to inform the school of their child's absence on the day of their absence by 9:30am. The two most efficient ways to do this are either by a phone call to the Office or via the Skoolbag App. Class rolls will be checked by the office staff at 9:30am and parents/guardians will be contacted via SMS if their child is absent and this has not been communicated. Parents will sign in and sign out their children at the Office in the relevant book. This form will stay with the Office to be entered onto the roll.
- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a further responsibility to communicate with the school explaining why an absence has occurred.

Principal and Staff

- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are recorded on the electronic attendance roll which is filled in by classroom teachers by 9:30am in the morning and 2:30pm in the afternoon.
- The School Office staff will enter the late arrivals and early leavers on the roll to ensure consistency.
- Staff are asked to inform the Principal if a student is away for more than 2 days without any communication of reasons for their absence.
- The Class Teacher and Principal have a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained absences, with a view to developing a plan to return to school and implementing strategies to minimise absences.

IMPLEMENTATION

- 1) Parents/Guardians are required to inform the school of their child's absence via:
 - The Skoolbag App. Parents/guardians need to go to the home page of the app and press **eforms**. From this menu they must select **Absentee Form**. The form must be filled in and signed at the bottom using a finger. Press '**View Summary and Submit**'. The School Office will receive a copy of this form via email which will be passed on to the relevant teacher.
 - Calling the School Office before 9:30am informing the school of their child's absence and the reason for it.
 - Emailing the school or the classroom teacher/s with the details of the absence.
- 2) If the school isn't informed of a student's absence by 9:30am, an SMS will go out to the parent/guardian asking them to contact the school informing them of the student's absence.
- 3) If the Parent/Guardian does not contact the school after the SMS contact with an explanation of the student's absence, the School Office will contact the parent/guardian as soon as practicable on the same day.

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4) Students who arrive late and leave early will have to have a form signed at school indicating the time of arrival/departure, the reason and the signature of the parent/guardian. The roll will be updated by the Office Staff as soon as practicable after the arrival/departure

5) Student absences will be noted on the formal school report – Semesters 1 and 2.

ONGOING UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES

- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance may result in a formal conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be referred to the Department of Health and Human Services.

REFERENCE/SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

Victorian Department of Education and Training, 2018, [School Attendance Guidelines](#)

RELATED POLICIES

Electronic Roll Marking Policy

REVIEW:

Latest Policy Review: April 2019

Ratified by the Education Board: 23rd April 2019