PURPOSE

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

GUIDELINES

Under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, schooling is compulsory for children of school age (six to seventeen years) resident in Victoria. They are required to be in full-time attendance at a government unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.

IMPLEMENTATION

Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find ‘catching up’ difficult.

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.

Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.

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.

Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled, during normal school hours every day of each term, unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance or attendance and enrolment for the student, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the school prior to classes commencing each morning regarding their child’s absence for that day.
- The information is recorded on the school’s daily absence notes and distributed to class teachers by administration staff. (APPENDIX B)
- Parents have a further responsibility to provide a written note or return a completed absence form (See APPENDIX B) to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
- A new letter ST21326 has been provided in CASES21 to advise parents that absences have been recorded without a reasonable excuse and the potential consequences if they have repeated absences recorded without a reasonable excuse.
• Students arriving late to or leaving early from school are to be recorded by the Parents/guardians in the Sign in/out register

School Responsibility

• The principal (student attendance officer or delegated nominee) has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
• Hamilton (Gray St) Primary will manage student absences and parent responsibilities in line with DET guidelines issued to schools in April 2014.
• All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, and are aggregated on our CASES21 database and communicated to the DET.
• The student attendance officer will provide attendance reports to the principal and class teachers on a weekly basis.
• Posters encouraging school attendance will feature prominently, as well as newsletter articles.
• Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
• Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the DET and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.
• The DET and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
• The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
• If on a child’s return to school after an absence does not have a written explanation for the absence the teacher will send home a green form to be filled out, signed and returned to school.
• The principal or teacher will contact the parents/guardians of unexplained or unapproved absences to ascertain the reasons and offer support for the family.
• At Hamilton (Gray St) Primary School, teachers and the student attendance officer are required to alert the principal to unexplained for unapproved absences on the second day.
• Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance may result in a formal attendance conference being organised.
• Unresolved attendance issues may be reported to the Regional Director.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle or earlier as required.
ABSENCE NOTE

Name: ________________________
Grade: ___________

This student was absent on the following date/s:
_____________________________
_____________________________

Reason :

☐ Illness (201)
☐ Parent Approved (807)
☐ Doctor Appointment (205)
☐ Dentist Appointment (209)
☐ Extended Holiday (804)
☐ Bereavement (211)
☐ Other ________________

Additional comment (if required) ________________________

____________________________________

_________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature: ________________________

☐ Parent/Guardian came to see me /
☐ Parent/Guardian phoned / /

Staff Member: _____________________________
APPENDIX B
(GREEN)

ABSENCE NOTE

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our records indicate ______________________________________

was absent or late without explanation on the following date/s: ____________________________

Please tick the appropriate reason for the absence:

☐ Illness (201)
☐ Parent Approved (807)
☐ Doctor Appointment (205)
☐ Dentist Appointment (209)
☐ Extended Holiday (804)
☐ Bereavement (211)
☐ Other __________________

Additional comment (if required) _____________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature: ________________________________

Date: / / 2015