

Cranbourne South PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Absence Learning Policy

Pearcedale Road Cranbourne South 3977 Tel: 9782 2999



Cranbourne South Primary School Student Absence Learning Policy refers to the 2014 guidelines supports schools and School Attendance Officers to meet their responsibilities and duties under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007* and *Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013*.

Guidelines includes:

- strategies to encourage high levels of school attendance and how to improve attendance where an issue is identified
- an explanation of the legal requirements of school-age children to attend school, and the processes required to excuse or exempt their attendance
- procedures for schools to record, excuse, monitor and follow 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*.
- an explanation of the procedures a School Attendance Officer will follow as required by the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007* and *Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013*.
- advice for School Attendance Officers to aid their decision making when a parent has not met their obligations.

The importance of full time attendance

- Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted.
- 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. Children and young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes across their lives. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age.
- 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.
- Conversely, limited school participation is associated with a greater chance of dropping out of school, disruptive and delinquent behaviour and may lead to a cycle of rebellion against authority. These outcomes have later implications for employment, a range of health risk behaviours (drug and alcohol abuse), homelessness, poverty, welfare dependence, and involvement in the justice system.

It is acknowledged that for some children and young people mainstream school environments may not always be the most appropriate settings. For the purpose of this document, participation in an approved re-engagement program is considered attendance at school.

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 for the student, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

A student is considered to be in attendance at school when involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the school (for example an excursion or camp), or where the student is engaged in a re-engagement program or another school part time to make up full time attendance and the schools or settings have agreed the time fractions, allocation of Student Resource Package (or other funding) and the educational plan for the student.

Home schooling in Victoria is a legally recognised alternative to attending a registered school. Parents who wish to home school their child must satisfy the requirements of the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority.

Cranbourne South PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Absence Learning Policy

Pearcedale Road Cranbourne South 3977 Tel: 9782 2999



Appendix A refers to DEECD documentation called 'Every Day Counts'; the responsibilities and importance of student attendance at school.

Appendix B refers to a Student Absence Learning Plan. Students who are taking extended absences from school must have a plan devised to support the education of students who are absent from school for an extended period. It may also be useful to develop a Return to School Plan for students who have been absent for an extended period.

EVALUATION

Guidelines are updated as per DEECD recommendations.

CERTIFICATION

This policy was adopted at the School Council Meeting held at Cranbourne South Primary School, on ...

Signed.....
School Council President

Signed.....
Principal

09 SEP 2014

Cranbourne South PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Absence Learning Policy

Pearcedale Road Cranbourne South 3977 Tel: 9782 2999



Appendix A

In primary school, some students **miss** on average **3 weeks** of school **per year**. That's **half a year** of school by the end of **year 6**.



EVERY DAY COUNTS

Primary school attendance

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.

Why it's important

We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.

If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school.

There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.

Each missed day is associated with progressively lower achievement in numeracy, writing and reading.

Getting in early

Attendance patterns are established early – a child regularly missing days in kindergarten or in the early years of school will often continue to miss classes in the later years, and receive lower test scores than their classmates. It's vital that students go to school every day – even in the early years of primary school.

What we can do

The main reasons for absence are:

Sickness – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they're ill. It's vital that they're only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

It's vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

"Day off" – Think twice before letting your child have a "day off" as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

Truancy – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent's permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If for any reason your child must miss school, there are things you can do with your school to ensure they don't fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.

- Develop an absence learning plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible.

Openly communicating with your child's school about all absences is a good way to prevent attendance issues being escalated to a School Attendance Officer. A School Attendance Officer is a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Regional Director who has authority to follow up attendance issues. Attendance issues that are escalated can lead to an Infringement Notice.

If you're having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

For more information and resources to help address attendance issues, visit:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx



Cranbourne South PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Absence Learning Policy

Pearcedale Road Cranbourne South 3977 Tel: 9782 2999



Appendix B

Students who are taking extended absences from school must have a Student Absence Learning Plan to support the education of students who are absent from school for an extended period. It may also be useful to develop a Return to School Plan for students who have been absent for an extended period.

Student name	
Year level	Date
Reason for absence:	
Date of last day of school:	Date of return to school:
Description of the educational program: Teachers/year-level coordinators should include elements of the learning program the student will be missing while away. The learning program should enable the student to more easily re-engage in class activities when they return.	
Activities for the student to undertake while away from school: For example, if a student is travelling, what research can they undertake, or what presentations can be prepared?	
Outcomes for the student to achieve:	
Resources that the student may find useful:	
Agreed role of parents/carers in supporting the absence learning program:	
Contact details for the student to stay in touch:	School phone number:
School contact person:	
Signature of parent/carer:	Signature of principal: