ATTENDANCE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Example School has in place to
    - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
    - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Hampton Primary School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's School Attendance Guidelines. It does not replace or change the obligations of Hampton Primary School, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

DEFINITION

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

IMPLEMENTATION/ PROCESS

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation 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 that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Hampton Primary School during normal school hours every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Hampton Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment at Hampton Primary School for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Hampton Primary School believes all students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Our school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

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Hampton Primary School parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Hampton Primary School about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Supporting and promoting attendance

Hampton Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by providing a Before and After School Care program, supervision before and after school and tailored support for families that are experiencing difficulty in ensuring their child is at school each day.

Recording attendance

Hampton Primary School records student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Hampton Primary School's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher or specialist teacher at 9:10am and 2:10 pm using Compass.

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Hampton Primary School of absences by:

- submitting the absence through Compass
- contacting reception by email or phone
- notifying the classroom teacher

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Hampton Primary School will notify parents by SMS. Hampton Primary School will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Hampton Primary School will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Hampton Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused absence**'.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate

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- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student, including a student required to attend Sorry Business
- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance

If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days without an acceptable reason, the class teacher or Assistant Principal will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Education Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for support, guidance or assistance from the school's psychologist or nurse or other relevant staff.

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Hampton Primary School decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer in the South East Victoria Region for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the Principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:
  - the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences; and
  - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful
- the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
  - the student has been absent for 5 consecutive school days; or
  - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Available on the staff shared drive.
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): Attendance
- Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy

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Evaluation and Review

School Council (via the relevant Education Sub-Committee) will conduct a review of the Policy annually as determined by School Council and DET guidelines.

This policy will be available to the community via the school's website

Policy Review and approval

Policy last reviewed	11.05.2026
Consultation	Consulted with School Council Wider School Community - ongoing via website
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2030

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APPENDICES

Attendance Roles & Responsibilities

Parent *Any parent or legal guardian registered.*	• Log absenteeism before or on the day of their child being absent via Compass. • If remaining outside with their child, they can sign in with their child via the office administration/kiosk. • If experiencing difficulty with either lateness or general attendance they are to schedule a meeting with their CT to establish strategies for support.
Teacher *The full-time or part-time classroom teacher of the student.*	• Takes the role twice a day by 9:10am & 2:10pm via Compass. • If unable to sight a child or remains unaware of a child's attendance, they are to mark a student as absent. • Remark any role if or when necessary to make any changes. • Note: Access Restriction students can't sign in via the kiosk as a safety precaution. • Year level Teams are to analyse Pulse data weekly at planning meetings to monitor general cohort attendance and lateness. • If a child is **late** to school for 10 non *consecutive days within a term.* The teacher is required to make contact with the parent to raise the concern. This should include discussing: reasons for the lateness and/or strategies to implement as a partnership between school & home. This should then be recorded via the chronicle 'Attendance' and closely monitored. • If a child is **absent -** *'unexplained'* for 3 consecutive days refer to the guide *'A Staged Response to Non-Attendance'.* • Submit an 'Absence' chronicle if they have any concerns about how a child is presenting at school, which goes directly to our Wellbeing Assistant Principal. • Develop a Learning Plan for a student who is absent for **+10 consecutive school days** e.g. extended family holiday, which includes a Principal Letter and accompanying activities. The family should seek formal 'approval' from the school principal and input this into Compass. • Hand recurring 'unexplained attendance letters' to the parent and follow up if not responded to. • Provide support when needed for a parent to update a reason for non attendance or lateness.
Admin	• On a weekly basis, print and deliver 'unexplained attendance' notice to CT to encourage declaring the absence. • Provide support when needed for parents when updating a reason for 'non attendance or lateness'. • Monitor and track attendance widgets via Compass and raise any concerns initially with the Classroom Teacher. • Send a 'fresh start' text message at the start of term to parents / carers of students whose absences require attention from the previous term's records.
Wellbeing Assistant Principal	• Monitors any 'Attendance' chronicles made and responds accordingly. • Implements and actions the guide to *'A Staged Response to Non-Attendance'* see below flow chart.

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Attendance Roles & Responsibilities

Guide to a staged response to non-attendance

A staged response to attendance is a structured, step-by-step approach for communicating with parents/carers about their child's unapproved and unexplained absences.

The approach is targeted to an individual student's needs and gradually escalates in intensity at each stage as their situation becomes more serious.

Stage	1: Unexplained or unapproved absence *Days 1 and 2 (including partial days)*	2: Unexplained or unapproved absence *Day 3 consecutive unapproved absence*	3: 5 or more days unapproved absence	4: Unapproved absences continue	5: No response to stage 4 letter/escalation to Principal	6: Letter to notify of intention to make an attendance referral
Activity	☐ SMS sent to parents / carers notifying of student absence. ☐ Record actions taken or update absence reason if provided by parent/carer in the student's system of record.	☐ Phone parent/carer and/or emergency contact and create an Attention Chronicle entry. ☐ Absence Chronicle will be auto sent to AW. ☐ Send Stage 1 email. ☐ Monitor Pulse in team meeting weekly	☐ Continue attempts to contact parent/carer by phone or face-to-face, offer additional supports. ☐ Send Stage 2 email. ☐ Monitor Pulse in team meeting weekly.	☐ Continue attempts to contact parent/carer, by phone or face-to-face, including an invite to an SSG. ☐ Send Stage 4 email referencing the parent/carer's legal obligations include an email received request. ☐ Consult with your school's Health and Wellbeing Key Contact regarding engagement of allied health, wellbeing or learning support services. ☐ Where relevant, consider Flexible Learning Options or other re-engagement programs. ☐ Leadership, in consultation with Area team, to consider: - 10+ days unexplained absence referral. - a Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) information request - a Police Welfare check if the student's whereabouts are unknown.	☐ Send Stage 5 letter/email as final warning before potentially submitting a referral to the School Attendance Officer. ☐ Continue attempts to contact parent/carer including sending a letter by registered post.	☐ Send Stage 6 letter/email to inform the parent/carer that an attendance referral will be made (refer to notes below for requirements around making referrals).
Suggested action officer:	Administration Staff	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher / AP	Assistant Principal (Wellbeing) Classroom Teacher	Assistant Principal (Wellbeing) Classroom Teacher	Principal / Assistant Principal
Notes All communication to parents / carers to be logged on Compass as an 'Attendance' Chronicle.			**Links:** For advice regarding attendance referrals, refer to Attendance Policy For advice regarding attendance SSGs, refer to: Schools Guide to Attendance Letter templates and key discussion points to support a staged response to non-attendance			

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