

POLICY STATEMENT**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

PURPOSE:

All Victorian children aged between six and 17 must be in fulltime 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.

Tecoma Primary School aims to develop a partnership in its approach to student attendance that highlights both school and parent responsibilities.

'IT'S NOT OK TO BE AWAY' is a state-wide initiative which builds a school and community approach to the issue of school attendance. It requires the support of both parents and the community if student attendance is to be successfully addressed.

At Tecoma Primary School we use 'It's Not OK to Be Away' to promote that student attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

We also continually monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance, as we know that this is a prerequisite for improving educational outcomes, as education is a sequential process and any absences can impact on student learning.

OBJECTIVE:

- To maximise learning opportunities and performance by encouraging students to attend school regularly, punctually and without unnecessary absences.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

- All students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for their absence.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents have an obligation to provide a written explanation of the reason for a student's absence.
- All student absences are recorded by teachers at 9 am and 2.30 pm, aggregated on our CASES21 data base and communicated to DET.
- Staff have the responsibility to follow up unexplained absences.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure all attendance records are maintained and monitored.
- If reasons for a student's absence remain unresolved, the school will convene a meeting with the parents/guardians and the student where appropriate and establish an attendance support process. Ongoing attendance issues will be reported to the Regional Director, North Eastern Region, Department of Education and Training (DET).
- The DET enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- Transfer notes must be completed for all students who transfer out of the school.

- **Students requiring special security e.g. from a women's refuge are under no obligation to provide details of the past school or current address. In this instance, the school should enrol the child and notify the principal.**
- Student absence figures will appear on the half year and end of year reports.
- These reports will also contain a copy of the schools' *Students' Attendance and Lateness Record*. (appendix 1)
- A number of incentives have been put into place at Tecoma to increase student attendance rates and to encourage punctuality.

These include:

- Personal invitations to the Principal's Attendance BBQ for students with an attendance of 97% and above, which is held during the last week of Semesters One and Two.
 - Weekly Punctuality Star – with an incentive of a free lunch order for a student whose name is drawn out a box. The child must be at school when their name is announced at 9:00am. This takes place on a random day of each week.
 - Phone calls home and home visits to families where there are attendance concerns.
- Student attendance data is reported to the school community as part of the Annual Report.
 - The granting of permission to be absent for employment in the entertainment industry will be decided by the principal's view that the proposed absence will not adversely affect the child's educational progress. The school needs to be informed about the educational progress of students being tutored.
 - If parents wish their children to be exempt from attendance at school to attend regular extra curricular off campus activities, application must be made in writing to the principal.
 - Where possible student appointments for medical/health related reasons are to be attended out of school hours.
 - Parents will be asked to confirm with the Principal their intentions for their child/ren to be absent from school to undertake extended travel.
 - Regional Directors are authorised to deal with applications for home tuition.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the Education Committee as part of the Policy Committee's review process, in three years time, or beforehand, if a significant issue arises.