



Thursday, June 14, 2018

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Dear Parent/Guardian

The Department of Education and Training has introduced a new policy requiring all Victorian Government schools to contact parent/guardians on the first day of a child's absence, as soon as practicable, when the absence is unexplained.

If your child is absent on a particular day and you have not contacted our school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

If your child is absent for any reason, you are required to notify our school as soon as possible on the day of absence. Notifying our school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure their safety and wellbeing and fulfils your legal responsibility.

This system also promotes daily school attendance. *Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education.* They learn new things every day and missing school puts them behind.

Our school is in the process of updating our Attendance Policy to reflect the new changes and parents will be able to access the new policy from our school website in the near future.

What this means for your family

If you have **not** notified the school in advance of your child's absence, you will receive an automated SMS message from the school on the morning of the absence. This change will be implemented at our school from the first day of Term 3 on Monday, July 16, 2018.

Our school uses the Compass Education system to record student attendance data. Compass Education is a web based system that is accessible on any modern web browser or by using the 'Compass School Manager' app available for iOS or Android.

In the near future, we will be providing you with your own log in and password information so that you can use the Compass Parent Portal to access your child(ren)'s attendance data. Compass also includes many other features many of which will be rolled out by our school in the future such as approving your child's participation in school events and excursions.

To support parents in becoming familiar with Compass Education, we will be inviting you to attend an information session at our school early next term.

As with all new systems, there is always the possibility of error. Your understanding and patience is appreciated during the implementation phase. If you have further questions please contact the school.

A copy of the DET Fact Sheet for parents for Same Day Notifications is attached to this letter.

**MOIRA FINDLAY
PRINCIPAL**



EVERY DAY COUNTS

SAME-DAY NOTIFICATION OF UNEXPLAINED STUDENT ABSENCES

FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS/CARERS

If your child is sick or absent, you are required to notify their school as soon as possible **on the day of absence** using one of the following methods:

1. **Online:** log the absence directly using your school's IT platform.
2. **Telephone:** the school office and let the staff know your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.
3. **Email:** the school and provide the staff with your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.

Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.

Why do I need to notify the school if my child is absent?

Schools need to know when and why a child is absent and you need to know if your child isn't at school.

From the end of Term 2 2018, all Victorian government schools are required to contact parents/carers as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained student absence. If your child is absent on a particular day and you have not contacted the school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

This system also promotes daily school attendance. Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education, they learn new things every day – missing school puts them behind.

What is your responsibility?

You are legally required to ensure your child attends school every day or you must provide an explanation for their absence. You should let the school know in advance of any upcoming absences or let them know in the morning if your child won't be at school. In order for schools to implement the same day notification requirement, it's essential that you provide the school with your most up-to-date contact details.

Generally one notification will be sent per family. Should there be circumstances that require both parents and carers to be notified, please contact the school to make the necessary arrangements.

What is the school's responsibility?

The school must notify you of an unexplained absence in relation to your child as soon as practicable on the same day.

Schools will let you know either by your school's online communications app, SMS, phone call or email. If you can't be reached because the school does not have your correct contact details (i.e. changed phone number, SMS/email failure notification received etc.), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on your child's file held by the school. Where possible, this contact will be made on the same day of the unexplained absence.

Where can I learn more about the process for managing student absences?

Ask your school for a copy of the *Attendance Policy* which outlines the school's processes and procedures for monitoring, recording and following-up of student absences.