

Timboon P-12 School

ATTENDANCE

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 Timboon P-12 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 Timboon P-12 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.

POLICY

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 Timboon P-12 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 Example School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Timboon P-12 School for particular activities.

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

Timboon P-12 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.

Timboon P-12 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 Timboon P-12 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

Timboon P-12 School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by: working closely with Brophy, developing highly engaging learning experience and curriculum, working closely with the school's Wellbeing Officer

Recording attendance

Primary School

Timboon P-12 Primary staff must record student attendance at least twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Timboon P-12 School's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at by 9.20, after recess and after lunch 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.

Secondary School

Timboon P-12 secondary staff must record attendance in every class. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Timboon P-12 School's duty of care for all students
- meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority requirements for VCE students

Attendance will be recorded by each classroom teacher at the beginning of each session 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 Timboon P-12 School of absences by:

- Contacting the front office or placing a note on Compass where appropriate.

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, Timboon P-12 School will notify parents by SMS if students are not present by 9.20 am.

Timboon P-12 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 Timboon P-12 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
- 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 three consecutive days, Timboon P-12 School 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 assistance from relevant Year Level Coordinators, School Counsellor and Principal Class Officers.

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 Timboon P-12 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 West Regional Office, Warrnambool 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 3 consecutive school days; or
 - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)
- [School intranet](#)

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on 2019 and is scheduled for review in 2021.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Primary School Teachers:

- Record roll on Compass before 9.20am, after recess and after lunch.
- Provide well planned and engaging learning opportunities that meet the point of need for students.
- Notifies front office of a student not attending class if they are recorded present on the roll.
- Classroom teacher contacts family upon three days of non-attendance.
- Conversations with families documented on Compass and actions and outcomes emailed to AP and Business Manager.
- Classroom teacher notifies Assistant Principal if attendance does not improve.

Primary Specialist

- Build relationships and know their students.
- Provide well planned and engaging learning opportunities that meet the point of need for students.
- Mark the roll for each session.
- Notifies front office of a student not attending class if they are recorded present on the roll.

Primary School Year Level Coordinator

- Build relationships and know their students.
- Supports teacher with strategies to engage the student and family.

- Tracks attendance data of their cohort on Compass each week and follows up with teachers in their teams each week about steps put in place to engage with student and family.
- Works with Primary AP to re-engage student and family.
- Celebrate attendance improvements at assemblies.

Secondary Teachers

- Build relationships and know their students.
- Provide well planned and engaging learning opportunities that meet the point of need for students.
- Ensure their rolls are completed for Form Assembly and Session 1 by 9.20am.
- Mark subsequent rolls in the first ten minutes of each class.
- Notify the front office, Sub-school leader or AP if a student who has been previously marked present is absent from their class.
- Notify the relevant coordinator if a student is absent for more than two classes in a week.

Secondary Year Level Coordinators

- Build relationships and know their students.
- Check Compass attendance rates for their cohort weekly for three day absences.
- Follow up referrals from teachers for three day absences with families.
- Support and work with students to set and achieve attendance goals
- Work with the Secondary AP to re-engage students with chronic non-attendance.
- Regularly inform students and families about attendance procedures.
- Celebrate attendance improvements at assemblies.

Front Office Staff

- Build relationships with students.
- Record late absences.
- Call parents when students absconding.
- Use correct coding to record absence types.
- Follow up unmarked and inconsistent rolls with relevant staff.
- Enter excursions and activities.
- Manage suspension entries.

Assistant Principals

- Build relationships and know students and families.
- Work with staff to reflect on pedagogy and engagement of students in lessons and curriculum.
- Monitor whole school attendance data for drops in attendance weekly.
- Work with teachers and YLCs to follow up students with falling attendance rates.
- Implement follow up procedures with families to re-engage students in school.
- Set targets with student cohorts.

- Publicize attendance achievement and progress at school assemblies.
- Provide ongoing updates of attendance processes to the school community.
- Liaise and refer to external agencies for support of students and families.

Principal

- Build relationships and know students and families.
- Monitor whole school attendance data with leadership team and implement interventions where necessary.
- Promote attendance processes and the importance of attendance with the school community.
- Celebrate attendance achievements.
- Work with leadership team to build capacity in working with families.

Students

- Attend school 95% or more of the time
- Sign out through the front office
- If you have an issue with being in a class discuss this with your Year Level Coordinator
- Track your attendance on Compass
- Know that you are valued and we want you here at school.

Interventions and referrals

- SMS sent each morning to families for a recorded absence of that day. (AM) via Compass.
- Classroom teacher (Primary) and Year Level Coordinator (Secondary) follow up non-attendance after three days. (Research suggests this should be less)
- For continued absences, in-school referrals can be made to the AP who will liaise with the Wellbeing/Counsellor staff member and teacher to re-engage the student with the family.
- Chronic absence external agencies and regional office involvement.
- Referrals to (Regional Office), Health and Wellbeing Support Officer Wimmera South West Area for absences of 5 days or more.
- Further support can be gained through Carlo Ticchi (ticchi.carlo.c@edumail.vic.gov.au) Manager Health, Wellbeing and Specialist Services Wimmera South West Area.

Absence Codes - Compass

200 Medical

201 Illness/medical

205 Medical Appointment

210 Welfare – welfare activities, custody, foster care, DHS

206 Hospitalised

207 Quarantine

202 Accident

203 External Counselling

208 Refusal
209 Dentist
211 Bereavement
300 Truancy
401 External Suspension
612 Study Leave – private study
701 Exited – gone but processing underway
702 Transferred
806 Parent Choice unauthorized. Parent explained but no given reason or reason is not health, religious, cultural, holiday related, includes going shopping, visiting friends or relatives or missed school bus.
807 Parent Choice Authorised – health religious, cultural, holiday related, includes special circumstances, unavoidable cause, unforeseen circumstances or family member ill.
804 Family Holiday
805 Religious/Cultural Observance
802 Exempt – exempt from attending class
613 Re-engagement Program – alternative setting for students at risk of disengagement
903 Extreme Weather
910 Natural Disaster – Bush Fire
911 Natural Disaster – Flood

School Activity Codes – These are set as school events/rolls on Compass

204 Sick Bay
400 Internal Suspension
600 General Education – educational activity organized or associated with the school. (i.e leadership program.
100 Meeting, Detention, Wellbeing
603 Duty Student
605 Special Event
607 Exchange or Transition Day
608 Tertiary/TAFE
609 Work Experience
610 School Production
611 Sports
612 Study Leave
600 Exams
701 Exited
901 Industrial Action
802 Exempt
613 Re-engagement Program
900 School Choice – student asked to stay home for reasons other than suspension or illness and student is somehow responsible.
904 Staff Planning/Curriculum/Report Writing Day