

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Rationale

It is essential that school communities understand the diversity of their students and families and provide a positive and welcoming environment for all.

All schools in the Broadmeadows Schools' Network are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students, which address their educational needs.

Hume Valley School expects students to come to school on time and to be ready to learn each school day of the year.

Hume Valley School's attendance policy aims to ensure that families are aware of the importance of regular school attendance for their children and for school staff to be active in our endeavour to improve school attendance data.

School community beliefs about the importance of attending school

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

Hume Valley School:

- is committed to promoting the key messages of 'It's Not OK to be Away'
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their learning outcomes, future employability and life choices
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Responsibilities

School responsibilities:

- To provide an engaging and relevant curriculum to ensure that students see purpose in coming to school.
- To communicate with families re absences through Compass messaging system.
- To provide families with current information about their children and to address any concerns raised that might impact a student's desire to be at school.

Student responsibilities:

- To come to school on time ready to learn
- To tell adults about things that might worry them that might affect them wanting to come to school.

Parent responsibilities:

- To ensure their child has the right equipment and resources to go to school (clothes, lunch, readers).
- To encourage their children to go to school every day and to talk about the importance of school.
- To communicate with the school if there is a problem and to seek medical support where illness is the cause of the absence.

Strategies

At Hume Valley School we promote 100% attendance by:

- ensuring all students are cared for and acknowledged every day, teaching them they are valued.
- providing a comprehensive and engaging curriculum that is appropriately modified for each student according to their PLSP.
- educating the students regarding the importance of school attendance, both short term and long term.

Responses to absences

At Hume Valley School we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- Whole school attendance average of above 80%
- To have no more than 10% unapproved absences for any student

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days or a pattern of absences has been identified, Hume Valley School will take the following actions:

- Daily SMS will be sent via Compass alerting parents to unexplained absences
- Classroom teacher will inform the sub school leader or attendance officer
- Sub school leader or attendance officer will make phone contact with the family

At Hume Valley School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

- support meetings and case management via the Student Wellbeing Team
- opportunities for extra-curricular activities may need to be considered.
- an alternative engagement program, or an individualised timetable may be considered.

Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Hume Valley School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

- Email the school email to inform HVS of any planned absences
- Provide medical certificates for all illness' more than one consecutive day
- Phone the school with information of students seen off campus during school time

Where a student's absence is below the desired percentage a letter will be sent home with all absence dates listed requesting explanation. This will occur twice a term. Where absences continue, or lack of explanation leaves absence rate at below 70% then the Principal will be informed and further action may be taken, including notifying the Department of Education and Training.

School Based Resources and Attendance Initiatives

- Participation in the Navigator Schools Pilot - linking disengaged young people to support services and interventions, and working with schools to support re-engagement planning
- Referral to relevant wellbeing services e.g. Student Support Services, KESO or Regional Office Student Wellbeing personnel
- Case Management inclusive of parents, school wellbeing staff, medical and mental health practitioners, community agencies as required.
- Participation in Hume Network Attendance initiative

Department of Education and Training Resources and Attendance Initiatives

Department of Education and Training Website-School Policy Advisory Guide- Attendance

DET-Parent Portal: 'My child has anxiety'

DET-Teacher Portal: 'School is better when you're here'....primary and secondary versions

EVALUATION

Review: This policy will be reviewed annually.

Ratified By Hume Valley School Council	August 2017
Review Date:	August 2018