

Attendance Policy

Rationale:

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 Seville Primary 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 Seville 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 Seville Primary School, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

Definitions:

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 Seville 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 Seville Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Seville Primary School for particular activities.

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

Seville 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.

Seville 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 Seville 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.

Late Arrivals and Early Leavers

- All enrolled students are required to attend school from 8.50-3:30 as per Seville Primary School hours of operation unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent. E.g: Illness is reasonable grounds for an early departure or lateness; shopping excursions or birthday parties are not.
- For late arrivals, parents/guardians need to sign in the late book and a late slip or the student will be marked as late/unauthorised and an explanation will need to be provided to the school via Compass/note/phone call. Students will need to take a 'Late arrival' slip to their teacher stating date, time of arrival and reason.
- Parents/Carers need to sign the early leavers book for students leaving before 3.30pm and an "early leavers" slip given to the appropriate teacher prior to departure.
- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school including late arrivals and early departures. The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained lateness / early departures are investigated, and that high levels of lateness/ early departures are adequately explained. The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of lateness / early departures, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise these occurrences. Ongoing unexplained lateness / early departure, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal conference being organised. Unresolved lateness / early departures and attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Human Services.
- All late arrivals and early departures are recorded in Compass by staff, are aggregated on our CASES database and communicated to the Department of Education.
- Student lateness / early departures and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data including lateness and early departures is reported to the Department of Education and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

Supporting and promoting attendance

Seville Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance. Our school also promotes student attendance by providing programs such as Outside School Hours Care, Breakfast Club and other after school clubs.

Recording attendance

Seville Primary School must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

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

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at the start of the school day and after lunch via 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 Seville Primary School of absences by:

- Recording student absence on COMPASS
- Informing the classroom teacher or notifying the Office
- Leaving a message on the School's absence line

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, Seville Primary School will notify parents by text message by 10am. Seville 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.

Seville 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 Seville 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
- 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, Seville Primary 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 Student Wellbeing Officer

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 Seville 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 North Eastern Victoria Regional department 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 10 consecutive school days; or
 - no alternative education destination can be found for the student

Additional and Relevant Documents:

SPS Statement of Values and School Philosophy
SPS Bullying Prevention Policy
SPS Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
SPS Child Safe Policy
SPS Diversity and Inclusion Policy
[School Attendance Guidelines](#)
School Policy and Advisory Guide: : [Attendance](#)
[School intranet](#)

Policy evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's three-year review cycle

**This policy was ratified by School Council in
March 2021.**

**This policy will be reviewed by School Council in
March 2023.**