**CPS ATTENDANCE POLICY**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to

* 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 Carnegie Primary School has in place to support, monitor and maintain student attendance and record, monitor and follow up student absences.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all students at Carnegie Primary School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training’s [School Attendance Guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/attendance.aspx). It does not replace or change the obligations of Carnegie Primary 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* and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

*Children* – means a person from 6 to 17 years of age.

## **Policy**

Schooling is compulsory for Children (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all Children to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children 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. Both schools and Parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Students are expected to attend Carnegie 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 CPS
* the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Carnegie Primary School or particular activities.

Carnegie Primary School (CPS) is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

CPS 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 support and intervention.

Part of the commitment CPS expects from its students is to arrive on time and be prepared to learn every day. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

CPS expects Parents to;

* ensure their Child/Children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered;
* provide valid explanations for any absence;
* communicate openly with the relevant staff at CPS about any issues affecting their child’s attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns;
* endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

**Recording attendance**

CPS must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

* meet legislative requirements
* discharge CPS’s duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the appropriate teacher at the start of the school day and after lunch using CASES21/eCASES or compatible third party software.

If students are 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 to the school.

Parents should notify CPS of absences by:

* Contacting reception if an unplanned absence
* Contact the school via our school’s Compass App
* Informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence

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, CPS will contact Parents by SMS push notification message, email, or telephone as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the Parent to respond.

If CPS cannot get in touch with the Parent, CPS will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school on the day of the unexplained absence.

CPS will keep a record of the reason given for each absence.

If the school determines that no reasonable explanation 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:

* illness
* 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
* c**u**ltural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
* short length, family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance and approval is given

**Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement**

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, CPS will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

* establishing a Student Support Group
* implementing a Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
* arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff

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 CPS 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 Southern Metropolitan Regional Office for further support.

## **More information and resources**

* [School Attendance Guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/attendance.aspx)
* School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/attendance.aspx)
* Unexplained Absences Fact Sheet <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/FactSheetforParentsandCarers.docx>

**Evaluation -**This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s regular review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on