



St Monica's Primary School Student Behaviour Policy

St Monica's Primary School is a School which operates with the consent of the Bishop of Sandhurst and is owned and operated by Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Limited). This Guidance forms part of the [CES Limited Student Behaviour Framework](#) which is available at www.smwodonga.catholic.edu.au.

1. Purpose

The St Monica's Primary School Student Behaviour Policy reflects the school community's shared expectations in relation to student engagement, attendance and behaviour. This Policy sets out the clear processes to be followed in order to support students' behavioural, educational and emotional engagement.

This Policy provides an overview of how St Monica's Primary School will:

1. promote positive behaviour in the school community;
2. seek to prevent behavioural issues; and
3. respond to challenging student behaviour occurring at school, at a school activity away from the school grounds or while travelling to or from school or a school activity.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with all School policies, including Attendance Monitoring Policy (See Appendices at end of the policy) and the [CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines 2018](#).

2. School Profile

St Monica's Primary School is committed to providing equitable access and opportunity for all. The School considers that awareness of, recognition of, and responsiveness to the needs and rights of all individuals are essential to human dignity. Inclusive practices embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging and provide opportunities for participation and achievement of appropriate learning outcomes.

Foundational to our work with students, families and the school community is the building of genuine, authentic relationships. The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the school community. All teachers, students, families,

parishes and the wider community contribute to fostering life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity of each person.

All schools within the Diocese of Sandhurst are committed to the Positive Behaviour Guidelines that the CECV (Catholic Education Commission Victoria) have set. St Monica's Primary school aligns itself with all CECV student behaviour practices that exist as a part of a Catholic education.

St. Monica's School motto is "Learn to Love. Love to Learn." The students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and attitude, the example set by Jesus. The philosophy underpinning this policy is centred on Gospel values and Restorative Practice. The uniqueness of each person is acknowledged and encouragement will be given to respect ourselves, others and the environment.

The key to good Learning and Teaching at St. Monica's Primary School is the learning environment, and the quality of this environment is significantly determined by the human relationships within the school. Pastoral care cannot be thought of in separate terms from the Learning and Teaching at St. Monica's; it is a key determinant of successful learning.

St. Monica's student engagement practices seek to promote respect; for self, others and secure and healthy environments in which students can achieve success.

At St. Monica's, each community member values each individual and are therefore committed to upholding the rights of each person. Students must learn to accept that they are responsible for their behaviour and its effects on others in the classroom and school environment

Teachers use their professional judgement when responding to issues within the schooling environment in accordance with the Student Engagement Flow Chart. This discretion and judgement ensures teachers take ownership of the procedures outlined in this policy.

A unified whole school approach characterised by a common understanding and language is the key to the success and fulfilment of this policy. The support and cooperation of staff and parents/guardians is paramount.

Students at St. Monica's Primary School have the right to feel physically and emotionally safe at all times. It is the school's duty to maintain a safe environment for all students where they are free to express themselves, develop and grow socially, emotionally and physically and to also be engaged in the learning that they are receiving.

3. Rationale

At St Monica's Primary School we strive to provide an inclusive education which values diversity and celebrates difference. Diversity is enacted through a pedagogy of inclusion and a commitment to uphold the rights of all to be welcomed, valued, acknowledged and actively engaged in education. Our learning community is committed to processes that support all students to make optimal progress and respect the rights of all students to learn in a positive and supportive environment. We seek to provide successful participation and to intervene as early as possible when students are not actively engaged in learning. Student behaviour is linked to the quality of the learning experiences. Purposeful, authentic, and relevant learning experiences that are of a sufficiently challenging yet

achievable standard maximise positive behaviour.

At St. Monica's we recognise the diversity of our staff, students and community. Students must be constantly affirmed and given the support to grow as individuals. At times their decisions and actions need to be challenged. This policy has been designed to support all members of the St. Monica's Primary School community and is used in order to promote positive behaviours amongst our students, families and staff members.

At St. Monica's we do not prescribe to a behaviour management program driven by punitive measures and control over children with the use of rewards and punishments. We believe in a philosophy of working with children, ensuring their voice is being heard and empowering them to take control of their own actions. We believe that relationships and having a growth mindset are the building blocks for all learning.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- be fair and respectful;
- support positive and respectful relationships between teachers and students and teachers and parents;
- promote respect for self, others and environment;
- establish a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success;
- recognise students as individuals, not just learners;

Whilst the document is a means by which staff can support student behaviour, it is by no means prescriptive for all instances. Continued behaviour that occurs is left to the discretion of the school leadership team which will determine appropriate courses of action. We do not, by any means, resort to any form of corporal punishment within this school.

4. Vision

St Monica's primary school vision is one that aims to support every child to reach their potential and form a close relationship with Jesus.

Our school vision:

Every child, every day, will be supported and challenged in a faith filled, welcoming and inclusive environment, underpinned by best practice and high expectations.

Our Graduate outcomes:

- ***Develop empathy, compassion and tolerance***
- ***Be an independent & curious learner***
- ***Have respect for themselves, the community and the environment***
- ***Take risks & develop resilience***

5. Mission

St Monica's Primary School is committed to providing educational opportunities that actively welcome, engage, inspire and challenge all students to learn in a safe and enlivening Catholic environment.

6. Aims

Our school is a community that exemplifies the Gospel values of love, forgiveness, justice and truth. Our school community recognises that everyone has the right to be respected, to feel safe and be safe and, in turn, our school community acknowledges each member's own obligation to behave responsibly. This Policy is intended to guide our school's actions. It has been developed in consultation with the school community and the CES and seeks to prioritise respectful relationships and safety in response to the rights and needs of all members of the school community. A safe and supportive environment respects the rights of all students to learn, the rights of all teachers to teach and the rights of all members of the school community to be safe. Every person at the school has a right to feel safe, to be happy and to learn. Therefore, our school aims:

1. to promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others;
2. to acknowledge the worth of all members of the community and their right to work and learn in a positive environment;
3. to maintain good order and harmony;
4. to affirm cooperation as well as responsible independence in learning; and
5. to foster self-discipline and to develop responsibility for one's own behaviour.

7. Principles

St Monica's Primary School strives to build a safe and positive school environment that is guided by Gospel values and honours the dignity of the individual, the family and the school.

The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the school community. Teachers, students, families, parish members and the wider community contribute to and share in the responsibility to foster life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity and safety of each person. Members of the school community are expected to contribute to the mission and vision of the school and to understand their rights and acknowledge their obligation to behave responsibly.

As a provider of Catholic education, the school Principal will consider the need for the school community to represent and conform with the doctrines, beliefs and principles of the Catholic faith when making decisions regarding matters of school administration, including enrollment. Pupils and families who are members of other faiths are warmly welcomed at our schools. However, the school reserves its right to exercise its administrative discretion in appropriate circumstances, where it is

necessary to do so to avoid injury to the religious sensitivities of the Catholic school community.

It is vitally important that the school is made aware of each child's individual circumstances and how these may impact upon his or her physical, functional, emotional or educational needs, particularly where the school is required to provide additional support to the child.

8. Definitions

At Risk behaviour	Any behaviour that has the potential to cause harm or injury to self or others. This includes physical, emotional or psychological harm.
Behaviour	The way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. In general terms, it can be considered to be anything we say or do.
Behaviour of concern	<p>May include behaviour that could be labelled as inappropriate or unacceptable, including bullying, harassment and victimisation.</p> <p>Is anything a person does or says which is likely to limit or deny access to regular school routines and activities.</p> <p>Is anything a person does or says which causes stress, worry, risk of or actual harm to others.</p> <p>Is anything a person does or says of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is impacted.</p> <p>Unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour can take place in different environments and mediums, e.g; sporting field, school yard, bus, line, classroom online, via social media, writing, drawing, or gesture.</p>
Behaviour support	The educational support a student receives from the school in order to learn and maintain identified appropriate behaviour.
Bullying	A broad concept which may generally be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying generally involves a series or pattern of events in which one individual has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour towards another individual.
Criminal offences	Behaviour that may be serious enough to constitute a criminal offence. If an offence has been or may have been committed, these concerns will be reported to the police or other authorities, as appropriate.

Discriminatory conduct	Conduct whereby an individual is treated less favourably on the basis of a relevant attribute, including their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or belief or gender reassignment. Such action may constitute discriminatory conduct that is contrary to Commonwealth and Victorian anti-discrimination legislation.
Expected behaviour	Behaving in a manner that is <i>suitable</i> for a public gathering, respecting the other members of the forum (class, meeting, and assembly, gathering) and treating others as you would wish to be treated. In general, appropriate behaviour is any behaviour that contributes to the positive learning environment and aligns with school rules and behavioural expectations.
Student	A person enrolled at a Sandhurst Catholic School. In this instance, St Monica’s Primary school, Wodonga.
SWPBS	School –Wide Positive Behaviour Support is a broad range of systematic and individualise strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes in schools while preventing problem behaviour.

9. Legislative Context

The *Education Training and Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.) (sec 4 cl 12) outlines the school’s obligations to ensure that the care, safety and welfare of all students attending the school. In discharging duty of care responsibilities, the school and teaching staff must exercise professional judgment to achieve a balance between ensuring that students do not face an unreasonable risk of harm and encouraging student independence and maximising learning opportunities. Non-teaching staff, volunteers and external providers must exercise judgment appropriate in the circumstances. The school must also comply with legislation related to Occupational Health and Safety for staff.

This document is informed by relevant Australian and Victorian legislation including:

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic.)

This document is also informed by the following resources:

- a) [Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#)

b) [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

c) [CECV Intervention Framework 2015](#)

d) [CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines 2018](#)

10. Shared Behaviour Expectations/Code of Conduct

St Monica's Primary school recognises the importance of providing clear guidance and expectations which are applicable to all members of the school community.

The table below sets out the School's expectations for its students, parents and staff.

	Students are expected to:	Parents/Carers are expected to:	Principals/Teachers & Staff will:
1.	take responsibility for their learning and have high expectations in themselves that they can learn	have high expectations of their child's behaviour and have an understanding of the school's behavioural expectations	promote positive reinforcement and enhance student self-esteem by having a planned approach for recognising and responding to appropriate behaviour
2.	model the school's core values of respect, endeavour, communication, trust and teamwork	communicate with the school in regards to their child's circumstances	deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the well-being of every child focusing on pro-social behaviours
3.	take responsibility for their own behaviour and the impact of their behaviour on others	cooperate with the school by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs	employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues
4.	comply with this policy and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. obey all reasonable requests of staff;2. respect the rights of others to be safe and learn; and3. respect the	provide complete, accurate and up to date information when completing an enrolment form and supply the school, prior to enrolment, with any additional information as may be requested, including copies of documents such as medical/specialist reports (where relevant to the child's schooling), reports from previous schools, court orders or parenting agreements	implement intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues in a manner that supports individuals

	property of others		
5.		comply with the school's behavioural aims and the school's Code of Conduct and support the school in upholding prescribed standards of dress, appearance and behaviour, in accordance with the terms of a child's enrolment at the school	consistently apply this policy through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances
6.		acknowledge and understand that unacceptable behaviour by a child, or repeated behaviour by a parent or guardian that in the school's view is unacceptable and damaging to the partnership between parent/guardian and school, may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment	plan for the professional development needs of all staff to enable them to develop and maintain positive relationships with their students
7.			recognise that for some student's additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and ensure that staff are committed to working with families to reintegrate students in an educational setting after exclusion

11. Shared Attendance Expectations

Ensuring that students attend school each day is a shared expectation of all students, parents and the wider school community. See school's Attendance Monitoring Policy (See Appendices at end of the policy).

The table below sets out the School's shared attendance expectations for its students, parents and staff.

	Students are expected to:	Parents/Carers are expected to:	Principals/Teachers & Staff will:
1.	attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students	ensure that their child's enrolment details are correct	proactively promote regular attendance
2.	be prepared to participate fully in lessons	ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually	mark rolls accurately each learning session
3.	bring a note from their parents/carers explaining an absence/lateness if not advised by parents through the established school processes	advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent	follow up on any unexplained absences promptly and consistently
4.	remain on the school premises during school time unless they have permission to leave from the school from parents	account for all student absences	identify trends via data analysis
5.	work with their teachers to develop learning activities to be included in any Student Absence Learning Plan and to be completed during a prolonged absence from school	keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays	report attendance data in the student report and school's Annual Report
6.	work cooperatively with the school to develop personal attendance improvement goals and strategies when their attendance has been inconsistent	support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students or arrange distance education after prolonged absences	support students whose attendance is problematic by developing 'Return to School' plans and working with families to implement individualised strategies
7.		work cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the school	report lengthy or unexplained absences to the Regional Manager
8.			work collaboratively with parents and students to develop an agreed Student Absence Learning Plan when a student will be absent from school for an extended period of time
9.			convene a Program Support Group meeting which is attendance focused with parents and students when a student's attendance pattern is of concern to the school
10.			provide ongoing intensive support for students if communication with parents

			has not been possible or if the student's attendance pattern continues to be irregular after the initial Program Support Group meeting
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12. School Action and Consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school practices, as well as targeted and individualised support when required. Effective student behaviour changes and student behaviour support is enhanced through internally-based school support structures, and externally-based family, education, community and interagency partnerships. The school will apply a range of supports and measures to address student behaviour of concern. Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, the school will institute a staged response, in accordance with the CECV Positive Support Guidelines, 2018. Where applicable, an incident report must be completed and provided to the Principal or relevant staff member.

Positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour

Our Graduate outcomes state that we want to encourage our students to become 'confident, resilient risk takers'. We attempt to do this by challenging our students in a safe and supportive environment and also scaffolding their learning to ensure that our learning environment provides opportunity for all students to succeed.

We provide students opportunities to develop their imagination and we strive to develop a Growth Mindset that will enable students to problem solve and embrace challenges.

We encourage our students to take responsibility for their own learning and actions. We are committed to offering our children a variety of learning experiences, which address individual needs and enhance a love of learning within each and every student.

St Monica's has high expectations and believe that all students are able to set learning goals and reflect on their progress to ensure they become independent learners. Particular emphasis is placed on students developing responsibility for their own learning through being organised and persistent in working towards achieving their goals.

We believe that all children have the potential to build competencies and capabilities to be responsible citizens with their own experiences, understandings and talents that assist them. The message of Jesus is central to who we are and all that we teach. Our School Identity statement reads; "Jesus is our guide, in him, we live, we move, we are called to be".

Through the enforcement of our positive behaviour framework and the associated yard behaviour matrix, our students are encouraged and supported in their efforts to demonstrate positive and socially acceptable behaviours. As a part of this framework, students are encouraged and a feedback process ensures the ratio of praise to corrective feedback is 4:1.

Tier 1: School-wide supports

The school implements school-wide preventative and early intervention strategies and practices for all its students to support positive behaviours, including:

1. Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
2. Providing physical environments that are conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
3. Ensuring student participation in the development and implementation of whole school expectations
4. Empowering students by creating opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in decision making
5. Monitoring attendance and academic progress of students with the view to recognising students at risk
6. Developing Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) in consultation with the Program Support Group (PSG) where appropriate for individual students

Tier 2: Targeted supports

In addition to Tier 1 supports, some students may require targeted interventions to meet behavioural standards, including irregular attendance. These students will be supported through a staged response, including:

7. Understanding the student's background and needs
8. Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
9. Providing consistent school and classroom environments
10. Scaffolding the student's learning program
11. Documentation of incidents relating to the management of student behaviours to inform decision making.
12. Revision of the Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
13. Parent consultation via phone or interview
14. Support strategies that might assist the student to self-calm, such a quiet space or designated alternative area that they can go to if they are feeling overwhelmed
15. Case conferencing

Tier 3: Intensive intervention

Reducing unwanted behaviour and consequences for inappropriate student behaviour:

The school adopts a staged response to inappropriate behaviour and appropriate responses may take the form of:

16. Non-verbal warning – e.g; eye contact / hand movement / shake of head
17. Verbal warning which identifies the misbehaviour followed by a ‘do over’ prompt providing student the opportunity to use expected behaviours
18. Changing student access to learning activity e.g; work on own, change groups, change location
19. Removing student access to learning activity e.g; take a break at your desk
20. Moving student from the room e.g; finish your work next door
21. Student required to stay back at end of class
22. Student required to complete work during recess / lunchtime

When concerns arise about a student’s on-going behaviour or when a student is displaying consistent behaviour of concern, St Monica’s Primary School will implement a targeted response to identify and address the behaviour and teach replacement behaviour. This may involve the following support strategies:

23. Convening a Program Support Group (PSG) meeting involving parents/carers/Learning Diversity/Pastoral Wellbeing coordinator and the student where appropriate.
24. Developing/Revising a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) or attendance plan
25. Development of a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and/or Safety Plan where appropriate for individual students
26. Referral to Catholic Education or external Health or Allied Health providers
27. Contact with the CES Limited Office

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to behaviours of concern in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour. Measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour, and are best used with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour. Disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the CECV Positive Support Guidelines and may include:

1. Restorative practice
2. Withdrawal of privileges
3. Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
4. Detention
5. Withdrawal from class if a student’s behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. In situations where the student is not able to comply with the instruction to relocate, the class (all other students) will be relocated/evacuated. The student may be temporarily

isolated from regular classroom activities to provide an opportunity to de-escalate or for a specified period of time. Parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

6. Suspension (in-school and out of school)
7. Negotiated transfer
8. Expulsion

A student may be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success, or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour which may put the health, safety and well-being of other students, staff or themselves at significant risk.

If other strategies are unsuccessful in modifying student behaviour, the school will follow the CES Limited Student Behaviour Framework and CES Limited Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion Policy.

See [Appendix 1](#) for further information on these measures.

Corporal punishment

The use of corporal punishment is expressly prohibited at the school and under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic).

Consultation

As every child's educational needs can change over time, it will often be necessary for the school to review any additional assistance that is being provided to the child, in consultation with parents/guardians and the child's treating medical/allied health professionals, in order to assess:

1. whether the additional assistance remains necessary and/or appropriate to the child's needs;
2. whether the additional assistance is having the anticipated positive effect on the child's individual physical, functional, emotional or educational goals; and
3. whether it remains within the school's ability to continue to provide the additional assistance, given any limitations that may exist.

13. Assessing and Mitigating Risk

To assist the school to discharge its safety responsibilities, St Monica's Primary School will adhere to an Occupational Health & Safety Program through which potential safety hazards are identified and analysed in terms of the likelihood of an event occurring, and the potential consequences if the event was to occur. A similar risk-based approach is taken with respect to Student Duty of Care, with the definitions of likelihood and consequences. St Monica's Primary School may engage the services of

the CES Limited for the purpose of assessing student safety risks and determining how best to support the needs of the students, staff and broader community.

It is important that all staff consistently enforce school rules and safety policies, and actively engage in ensuring the physical and emotional wellbeing of students.

14. Policy Evaluation and Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with the school community. This policy, and its application is regularly monitored and evaluated for effectiveness and appropriateness. Where necessary, adjustments to this policy and its application will be made.

This policy will be reviewed annually and in conjunction with the school's strategic and annual plans, will reflect the needs of the school community based on data collection and analysis.

Appendix 1 – General Information relating to disciplinary measures

Withdrawing privileges – Schools can withdraw student privileges as a consequence of breaching classroom or school behavioural standards. The specific privileges withdrawn will vary between schools and even students at the same school, however they may include things such as representing the school at inter-school sports or attendance at a school event. This must be time-limited and the risk to the student's engagement should be considered. The student must be told why privileges are withdrawn, and how they should behave for privileges to be reinstated.

Withdrawal from class – If a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class or where there is possibility of harm to others, that student may be temporarily removed from regular classroom activities. In more serious cases the student may be required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Schools have a duty of care to ensure that students are supervised at all times, including when they are removed from a class. Where appropriate, parents and carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

Withdrawal from class does not constitute formal school exclusion such as suspension (including in-school suspension) or expulsion.

Detention – Detention is an appropriate response for a wide range of less serious classroom and school behaviour breaches. Detention can effectively reinforce to students the importance of maintaining appropriate behaviour standards.

During detention teachers may instruct a student to finish school work which has not been completed in regular classroom time as a result of the behaviour, new work or other duties. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this. Where students are required to undertake detention after school hours, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

Where the decision is made that an after-school detention is appropriate, the Principal should ensure that parents or carers are informed at least one day before the detention. Where family

circumstances are such that an after-school detention would create undue hardship, St Monica's Primary School may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with the parent or carer. Examples include where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents or carers. Schools are permitted to detain students but are encouraged to take into account family circumstances and negotiate with parents and carers as appropriate.

Suspension – Suspension is the process of excluding a student from standard instruction or educational opportunities for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days.

Expulsion – In some instances it may be appropriate to suspend or expel a student who consistently compromises the safety and order of the school in order to protect the learning environment for remaining students and continue with effective teaching.

Suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures and are for when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response, or where there is a threat to another person and immediate action is required.

Appendix 1:

Promoting, recording, following up and monitoring attendance in Primary and Secondary Schools

Promote and Maintain Full School Attendance

Schools can promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through developing whole school strategies. A clear whole-school strategy should:

Articulate high expectations to all members of the school community

Create safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning

Adopt consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absence

Implement data-driven attendance improvement strategies

Provide early intervention of and supportive intervention for students at risk of poor attendance

Link with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support

Access specialist support for individual students which identifies behavioural, health, or social issues

Provide a staged response to non-attendance

Support students to return to school after absences

(State of Victoria 2018, p. 5-6)

Record

Schools to record attendance twice per day in primary schools and in every class in secondary schools including any excuses given for absences.



Following up Absences

HAS THE ABSENCE BEEN EXPLAINED?

NO

Contact the caregiver responsible for the student for that day as soon as practicable on the same day.

If contact cannot be made with the parent/carer you should attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the students file.

Has the caregiver provided a reasonable excuse? See over

NO

Inform parent/ caregiver about the importance of attendance and record

YES

Has the caregiver provided a reasonable excuse? See over page

YES

Record the absence

Monitor

Attendance data must be monitored regularly and analysed to identify student absence patterns.

If a student has been absent for more than 5 days in a term for any reason, the class teacher should consider follow up and improvement strategies.

Resources

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES, STATE OF VICTORIA (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING)

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au>

CATHOLIC EDUCATION SANDHURST

(03) 5443 2377

ATTENDANCE WORKS

www.attendanceworks.org

Appendix 2:

Common reasons for school absence and general advice for principals

Common reason for absence	Parent approval required	School required to confirm reason is authentic	Reasonable excuse for parent	General advice for principals	Basis in ETR Act for reasonable excuse	Follow up required
Illness or accident	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(a)(i)	No
Medical/dental appointment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if appointment cannot be scheduled outside school hours	2.1.3(fa)	No, unless absences become excessive
Attending or observing a religious event or obligation	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(f)	No
Suspended	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(d)	Yes (suspension guidelines)
Bereavement such as a death of a family member, attendance at a funeral and/or related mourning activities (sorry business)	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve	2.1.3(fa)	Offer and provide support as required
Truancy	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(e)	Meetings, Attendance Improvement Plan
School refusal	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve if parents and school are working on plan to address cause	2.1.3(fa)	Yes – meetings to identify and address the cause
Family holiday	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve if parents notify in advance. School policy should be developed for long or frequent/ repeated holidays	2.1.3(fa)	Student Absence Learning Plans developed in conjunction with classroom teachers
Required to comply with another law	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(a)(i)	No, unless absences become excessive. Offer and provide support as required
Cultural observance	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve if parent notifies in advance	2.1.3(fa)	No
Leisure (shopping, visiting relatives)	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Do not approve	2.1.3(fa)	No
Unforeseen event	Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if satisfied event was unforeseen and prevented attendance	2.1.3(a)(i)	No
Unavoidable cause	Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if satisfied event was unforeseen and prevented attendance	2.1.3(a)(i)	No
Other – special event or participation in elite sporting events/training	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Case-by-case basis	2.1.3(fa)	No
Exemption	No	No	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(g)	Ensure any conditions of exemption are met. Monitor attendance at other provider
Employment in the entertainment industry	Yes	Yes (through approving exemption)	Yes	N/A	2.1.3(g)	Yes, to ensure conditions of exemption are complied with

For more information see 'Procedures to Manage Student Absence' in the School Attendance Guidelines:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/managingabsence.aspx>