**bENDIGO VIOLET STREET PRIMARY**

**attendance policy**

**AIM:**

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.

**GUIDELINES:**

1. The *Education Act 1958* requires that children of school age (six-seven years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.
2. Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find ‘catching up’ difficult.
3. Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.
4. All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
5. Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence, shopping excursions or birthday parties are not.
6. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
7. Parents have a further responsibility to provide a phone call, text, written note or return a completed ‘Reason for Absence’ form to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
8. Following unexplained absences, class teachers will send home ‘Reason for Absence’ form for parents to complete.
9. The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
10. All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our CASES 21 database and communicated to DET.
11. For those students who have unexplained absences for more than two consecutive days, the classroom teacher will phone or text the parents/carers to ascertain reasons for non-attendance. If the unexplained absences continue, the principal will make contact and arrange an attendance meeting. An attendance concern letter will also be sent home. If absences continue DET will be informed.
12. The Department of Education and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
13. The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
14. The Principal (or Principal’s nominee) will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimize absences.
15. Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance, will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services and followed up at DET regional level.
16. Student attendance & absence figures will appear on student June & Dec. reports.
17. Late arrivals will be monitored by the school via the ‘sign in’ process. Data for late arrivals will be aggregated to determine absence levels also.
18. Early departures will also be monitored via the same ‘sign in’ process. Parents will be advised that a reason for early departure will be recorded by the school for attendance audit processes.
19. Aggregated student attendance data is reported to DET and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school’s three-year review cycle

**Date: November 2018**