



*Nar Nar Goon Primary School*

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### PURPOSE

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.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school and to explain to school staff and parents/carers the key practices and procedures Nar Nar Goon Primary School has in place to:

- support, monitor and maintain student attendance
- record, monitor and follow up student absences.

This policy applies to all students at Nar Nar Goon 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 Nar Nar Goon Primary School, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

### POLICY

Nar Nar Goon 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 expected to attend Nar Nar Goon 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 Nar Nar Goon Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Nar Nar Goon Primary School for particular activities.

### Supporting and promoting attendance

Nar Nar Goon Primary School's *Student Engagement, Welfare and Management Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by: rewarding students with "Outstanding Attendance" certificates, newsletter articles, reporting absence data through student reports and promoting the "It's Cool to be at School" message.

## Recording attendance

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

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

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teachers using SENTRAL software program.

1. Once will be at 9:05 am at the start of the school day and,
2. Again at 2.05pm, after lunch.
3. Specialist teachers who have classes during these times will mark attendance on behalf of the usual classroom teacher.

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

## Absent students and recording absences procedure

Teachers who find a student in their class absent, will mark them as unapproved until otherwise notified. For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

1. If a student is absent on any one day, and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Nar Nar Goon Primary School will notify parents by email. Nar Nar Goon Primary School will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent/s to respond
2. If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.
3. Nar Nar Goon 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.
4. If Nar Nar Goon Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**authorised absence**'.
5. If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unauthorised 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 and a student absence learning plan is put in place.

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 should notify Nar Nar Goon Primary School of absences by contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence directly via phone or by accessing and submitting the online notification facility available on the website, informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence.

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. If students at Nar Nar Goon primary school are going to be absent due to extended family holidays, the school will provide a Student Attendance Learning Plan to the family in consultation with the parent. The Student Learning Plan is an attachment to this policy.

### **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, Nar Nar Goon 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 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.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Nar Nar Goon Primary School about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

### **Referral to School Attendance Officer**

If Nar Nar Goon 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 South Eastern Victoria Region 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.

### **MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)
- [School intranet](#)

Appendix:

*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.