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## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **RATIONALE:**

The DET Guidelines on student attendance set out the school's responsibility to manage student attendance. These guidelines state that all students enrolled in government schools must attend on a full time basis unless absent with the authority of the school. Cranbourne West Primary School believes attendance is intrinsic to educational opportunity and this policy acknowledges that attendance depends on active co-operation between school, parents/caregivers and the student. It outlines the procedural requirements for supporting and managing student attendance.

### **GENERAL STATEMENT:**

The objectives of the processes are:

- To monitor and to improve student attendance at school.
- To raise awareness of the value of attending school in the community.
- To establish school protocols of student attendance.
- To implement Department of Education policy in respect to the 'It's Not Ok to be Away' and 'It's Cool to be at School' recommendations.

### **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES:**

1. Establish an expectation that students attend school on a regular basis by further developing procedures that will monitor attendance patterns.
2. Student attendance is entered daily via E-cases by teaching staff and the Student Welfare Co-ordinator is notified of three consecutive days of unexplained absences. At this stage, parents are contacted by ES staff member by phone to supply an explanation for the absence. Failure to contact the parent results in written correspondence being sent home requesting explanation of the absence.
3. At the commencement of each term a print out of their child's unexplained absences is sent to the parents listing the date of each absence. The parent/care-giver is requested to indicate the reason for the absence and return this information to the school.
4. Students leaving early must be signed out of the school in the Early Departure book by a parent/guardian or nominee at the school office. Photo identification must be produced.
5. Student absences for each semester are to be noted on Student Reports.
6. The school community is to be reminded on a regular basis via the newsletter about the value of student attendance and the processes employed at the school for monitoring attendance.

7. Annual Report statistics will be noted by the Leadership Team and if there are cohorts of children above the state average in absences, procedures will be reviewed and further investigations will take place to determine causes.
8. ES staff will be asked to print out CASES 21 reports at the end of each term so that the Student Welfare Co-ordinator may examine the reports and look for trends.
9. Class teachers will ensure that children have explanations for their absence, either through notes or verbal confirmation from parents. In such cases where verbal explanations are provided by a parent, the teacher/office staff will complete the absence form and place it in the front of the grades attendance roll.
10. Student absences that total multiples of 10 days will be followed up by the Student Welfare Co-ordinator. In these cases initial contact will be made with the family by phone and a package sent to the family that contains articles on the negative effects school absences have on academic and social development of students. Continued absences will result in parents being requested to attend a meeting with the Student Welfare Officer.
11. A summary report on student absences will be provided to the Principal and Student Welfare Co-ordinator at the end of each term.
12. Class teachers will record and monitor late arrivals. Frequent late arrivals will be referred to the Student Welfare Co-ordinator for follow up with the family.[phone/written contact]
13. At the commencement of each term all teachers will be provided with a summary of absences in their class. In the case of poor student attendance, the teacher will consult with the Student Welfare Co-ordinator and review attendance records to decide upon the best strategies to be employed to promote attendance. As truancy is often indicative of other problems including family issues, the support strategies employed by the Student Welfare Co-ordinator will be determined on a case by case basis. However, they may include:
  - Initial telephone contact with parents/care-givers
  - Counselling sessions for parents and/or students.
  - Formation of a support group.
  - School attendance as a pre-requisite to extra-curricular activities.

On going truancy issues will be reported by the Principal or Student Welfare Co-ordinator to the appropriate Welfare and Government agencies.

## **EVALUATION:**

This policy will be reviewed on a cyclic basis.

Ref: SOTF Reference Manual 4.1.6-School Attendance; Student Attendance; Student Attendance Guidelines 1997; Keeping kids at school: Issues in Student Attendance.

School use only:

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