ATTENDANCE POLICY

RATIONALE

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction,
- 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 Karingal Primary School has in place to
  - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
  - record, monitor and follow up on student absences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Karingal 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 Karingal 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* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

POLICY

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.

Students are expected to attend Karingal Primary School during normal school hours every day of each

term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student, or
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Example School, or
- the student is registered for homeschooling and has only a partial enrolment in Karingal Primary School for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Karingal 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 committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged to approach a teacher and seek assistance if any issues are affecting their attendance.

Karingal Primary School parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence.

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

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.

Expectations:

Consistent student attendance at Karingal Primary School is an expectation that relies on family and school support.

Students:

- All enrolled students are expected to attend all of each day.
- Any student arriving after 9:00 am **must report to the office** to obtain a 'late pass' before they enter the classroom.
- In particular circumstances, students may need to meet with their classroom teacher to arrange for missed work to be completed.

Parent/Guardian/Carer:

- Ensure your child arrives at school no later than 8:55 am.
- If your child is going to be late or absent, the parents/guardians/carers must notify the office or call the absence line by 10:00 am.
- Provide the school with a reason for your child's absence.
- Complete relevant documentation to assist the school in noting your child's absence.

Parents/guardians/carers need to ensure that the school always has their correct contact details.
- If a Medical Certificate has been provided to the school which covers more than one school day then parents/guardians/carers will not need to call the Absence Line to report absences covered by the certificate. Otherwise, parents/guardians/carers will be required to report their child absent.

Admin Staff:
- All attendance data to be transferred into CASES weekly.
- Supply students who arrive after 9:00 am with late passes to present to the classroom teachers upon their arrival.
- Send out letters to parents/guardians/carers for absence approval.
- Listen to the absence line, and document any messages left and check for email absence notifications from the school website.
- Filing absence notes into archives.
- Verify class rolls have been submitted.

Teachers:
- Must be located in their line-up area no later than 9:00 am.
- Mark attendance roll on ***Compass*** no later than 9.10 am.
- Any student arriving after 9:00 am must be marked as absent for the morning. Students arriving after the bell **must be sent to the office** for a late pass.
- The roll must be marked again at 2:40 pm and/or sent to the office by 2.50 pm sharp.
- The Student Wellbeing Officer or delegated staff member will contact parents/guardians/carers on the day of absence if there has not been a notification received by 10:00 am.
- The Student Wellbeing Officer or delegated staff member will conduct a home visit for any unexplained absences of 3 consecutive days.

The Karingal Primary School attendance policy shall be strictly adhered to and shall be distributed at the beginning of each year. The Principal/Wellbeing Coordinator will monitor children considered vulnerable through excessive absences and details will be distributed to class teachers at the beginning of the year.

Individual attendance plans shall be put in place for children who experience excessive absence traits (more than 5 non-substantiated days in one term).

The individual attendance plans may include:
- Home visits
- Revised school teaching plans
- Counselling and support groups
- Correspondence detailing the school's policy and the Education Act requirements for parents/guardians/carers.
- Regional Support by the local Regional Principal Consultant.

Supporting and encouraging attendance

Karingal Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also encourages student attendance by: Punctual Powerball, breakfast club, running club and the Primary Welfare Officer

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Karingal Primary School of absences by:

- Calling the absence line, on the website or lodging an absence on Compass by 10:00 am on the day of the 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, Karingal Primary School will notify parents by phone call. Karingal Primary School will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Karingal 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 parents meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Karingal Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse 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:

- 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

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 will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

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, Karingal 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 the school's Primary Wellbeing Officer

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their families, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required,

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Karingal 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 Regional Office for further action.

If, after multiple attempts to contact 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): Attendance

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Plan last reviewed	October 2025
Ratified by School Council	November 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2028