



Attendance Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact 9345 6053.

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 Travancore School has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Travancore School. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education's School Attendance Guidelines. It does not replace or change the obligations of Travancore School, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

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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 Travancore 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 Travancore School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Travancore School for particular activities.

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

Travancore 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 approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Travancore 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 Travancore 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.

Recording attendance

Travancore School staff record daily attendance. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Travancore School's duty of care for all students

Attendance is recorded by the key teacher using Compass.



In addition to recording the attendance on Compass, some programs adopt additional measures:

- Operation Newstart and Operation Newstart iLead – Head checks are conducted regularly throughout the day, for example when changing locations, and at the start and end of each activity
- Banksia – While Compass records which students are on the ward and therefore eligible to attend, a paper roll is maintained for attendance in each activity.

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 Travancore School of absences by contacting the key teacher by phone or SMS, if the absence is planned or unexpected.

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, Travancore School will notify parents by SMS, email or telephone. Travancore 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.

Travancore School will keep a record of the reason given for each absence and will notify a student's home school of any 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](#) (Vic) and the [School Attendance Guidelines](#).

If Travancore 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

The Principal will also work closely with the student's case manager to determine whether there is a reasonable excuse for a student's absence.

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, Travancore School will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance.

Generally, before attending Travancore School, a student will have plans in place to support attendance, including:

- an Attendance Student Support Group
- a Return to School Plan
- an Individual Education Plan
- a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period

Travancore School will review or develop these plans and arrange for assistance from relevant staff including the student's home school and case management team.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

Given the unique nature of Travancore School, it is unlikely that a referral would be made directly to a School Attendance Officer, as students are engaged for a short period of time.

Travancore School staff support a student's attendance at their home school, and this may include supporting the home school to make a referral to a School Attendance Officer in the South Western Victoria Region for further action.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings



- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Attendance](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before October 2028