



ALBANY RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy



REVIEW DATE: 2027



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the Albany Rise Primary School Administration.

RATIONALE:

Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult. Absenteeism can also contribute significantly to student failure at school.

PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To maximise student learning opportunities, engagement in learning and performance by ensuring that staff and parents/cares have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.
- 1.2 To ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and to attend school every day the school is open for instruction.
- 1.3 To ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- 1.4 To explain to school staff and parent they key practices and procedures that Albany Rise Primary 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 Albany Rise 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 Albany Rise Primary School's parents and School Attendance Under legislation of the School Attendance Guidelines.

DEFINITION:

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has a 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



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networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation into their community.

2.1 Students are expected to attend Albany Rise Primary School during normal school hours, every day of each term, unless:

- There is an approved exemption from attendance for the student
- The student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Albany Rise Primary School, or
- The student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Albany Rise Primary School for particular activities.

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

2.3 Albany Rise 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.

2.4 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 their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports

2.5 Duty of care policy requires student supervision to occur from 8.45am to 3:45pm No student should be attending school outside these hours, unless they are attending an approved event or OSHC. Staff are not on duty before 8.45pm or after 3.45pm.

2.6 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 there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

2.7 Albany Rise Primary School parents are committed to ensuring their attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to openly with the school and providing valid explanation for any absence.

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

2.9 Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absences from school and endeavor to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours. Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence; shopping excursions or birthday parties are not. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.



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SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ATTENDANCE:

- 3.1 Albany Rise Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.
- 3.2 Our school also promotes student attendance by offering programs such as the school's Breakfast Club and Student Wellbeing Co-Ordinator.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE:

Albany Rise Primary School must record student attendance twice per day.

This is necessary to:

- 4.1 Meet legislative requirements
- 4.2 Discharge Albany Rise Primary School's duty of care for all students
- 4.3 Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at the start of the school if students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.
- 4.4 If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.
- 4.5 Students arriving late will be recorded as late (L) on the class roll. Students arriving late must sign in at the office and record the reason for their lateness before taking a Late Pass to hand to their teacher – refer to Flow Chart.
- 4.6 Students' leaving early must be signed 'out' at the office and an 'Early Leavers' pass handed to the classroom teacher. No student should be leaving before 3.30pm without an authorised adult.

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 Albany Rise Primary School of absences by:

- 5.1 Communicating to the classroom teacher via Compass (parent portal), Class Dojo, email or a phone call to the school office.
- 5.2 If previously notified by a parent or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Albany Rise Primary School will notify parents via SMS at 11am. Albany Rise 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.
- 5.3 Albany Rise 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 responsibility under the Education Training Reform Act 2006 and the School Attendance Guidelines.
- 5.4 If the school considers that the parent has provided a reasonable excuse for their child's absence, the absence will be marked as **'explained absence'**.



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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

5.5 If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence an 'unexplained absence' form will be sent home by the school, as further reminder an absence has not been explained. Until a parent has provided a reasonable excuse, the absence will be recorded as an '**unexplained absence**' in the attendance roll.

5.6 Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused

5.7 The school will monitor unexplained absences and send home an 'unexplained absence form'

5.8 The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.

5.9 Students attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.

MANAGING NON-ATTENDANCE AND SUPPORTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

6.1 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.

6.2 Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, Albany Rise 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 staff at school, such as the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator

REFERRAL TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER:

7.1 If Albany Rise 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 North-Eastern Victoria Regional Office for further action: refer to the Attendance Flow Chart



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7.2 If, from multiple attempts to make 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 days; or
 - No alternative education destination can be found for the student.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE RECORDS:

8.1 When enrolling international students, ARPS will effectively monitor student attendance and implement a documented intervention strategy where attendance is at risk of failing to meet the minimum Student Visa requirement (attendance of a minimum 80% of the scheduled course contact hours during each study period). See: *ISP Quality Standards and School Resources* under

[Department resources](#)

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicity on our school’s website
- Included in the staff induction processes
- Included in the staff handbook
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/ meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Resources:

Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0APsGZOeO2A7QUk9PVA>

Website: <https://albanyrise-ps.vic.edu.au/about-us/policies/>

Policy last reviewed	19 th June 2024
Approved by	School Council: Principal:
Next schedule review date:	2027



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SAME-DAY NOTIFICATION OF UNEXPLAINED STUDENT ABSENCES

FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS/CARERS

If your child is sick or absent, you are required to notify their school as soon as possible **on the day of absence** using one of the following methods:

1. **Online:** log the absence directly using your school's IT platform.
 2. **Telephone:** the school office and let the staff know your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.
 3. **Email:** the school and provide the staff with your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.
- Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.

Why do I need to notify the school if my child is absent?

Schools need to know when and why a child is absent and you need to know if your child isn't at school.

All Victorian government schools are required to contact parents/carers as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained student absence. If your child is absent on a particular day and you have not contacted the school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

This system also promotes daily school attendance. Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education, they learn new things every day – missing school puts them behind.

What is your responsibility?

You are legally required to ensure your child attends school every day or you must provide an explanation for their absence. You should let the school know in advance of any upcoming absences or let them know in the morning if your child won't be at school. In order for schools to implement the same day notification requirement, it's essential that you provide the school with your most up-to-date contact details.

Generally one notification will be sent per family. Should there be circumstances that require both parents and carers to be notified, please contact the school to make the necessary arrangements.

What is the school's responsibility?

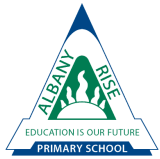
The school must notify you of an unexplained absence in relation to your child as soon as practicable on the same day.

Schools will let you know either by your school's online communications app, SMS, phone call or email. If you can't be reached because the school does not have your correct contact details (i.e. changed phone number, SMS/email failure notification received etc.), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on your child's file held by the school. Where possible, this contact will be made on the same day of the unexplained absence.

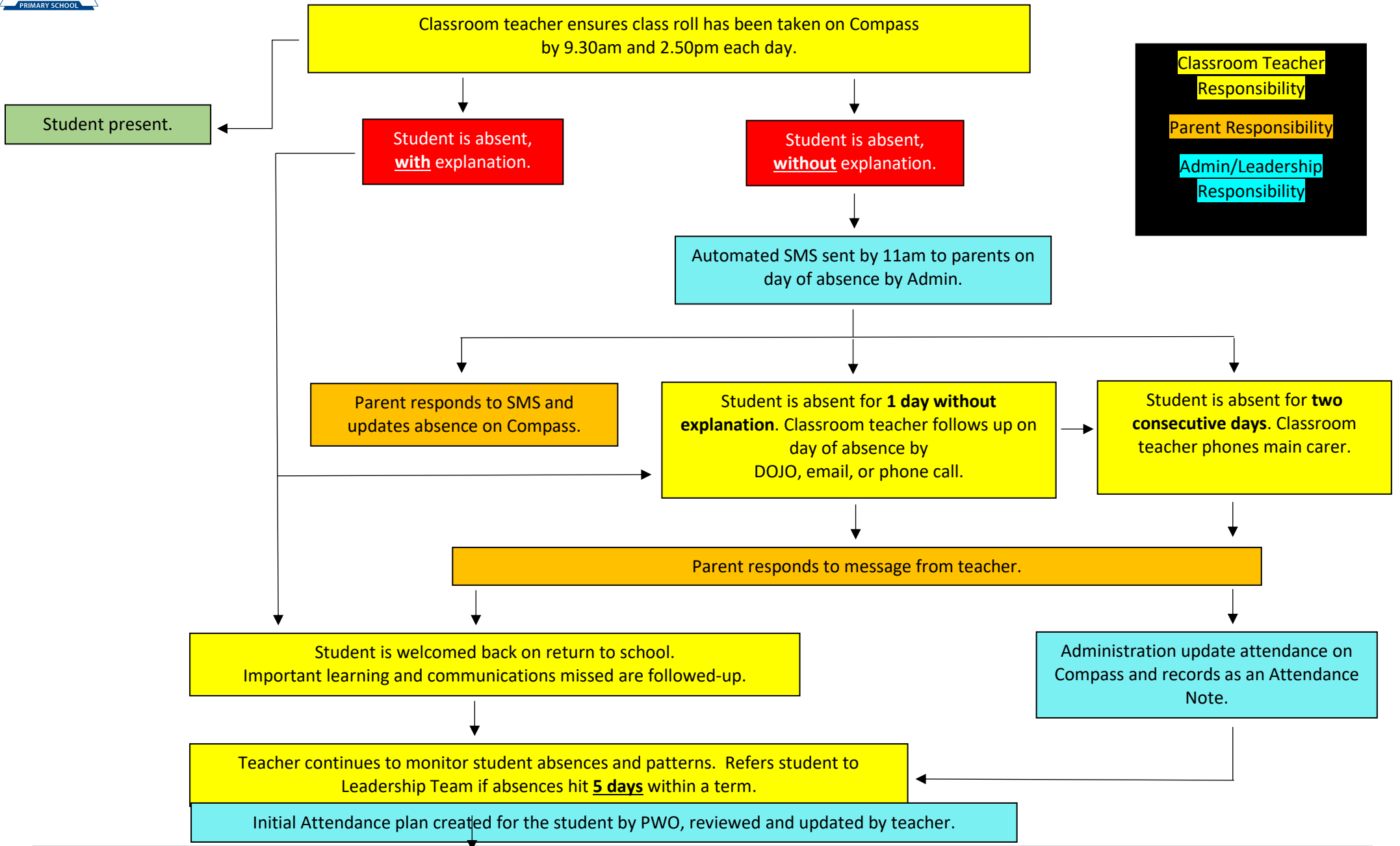
Where can I learn more about the process for managing student absences?

Ask your school for a copy of the *Attendance Policy* which outlines the school's processes and procedures for monitoring, recording and following-up of student absences.





ALBANY RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART





DOCUMENTED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – ATTENDANCE POLICY

APPENDIX B:

Teachers, Admin staff and trusted adults	PLC Leaders/Wellbeing Staff (PWO)	School Improvement Team	Executive Leadership team
<p>Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record student attendance twice per day in primary schools; before 9.30am and at 2.50pm. Develop an absence learning plan for students absent for five consecutive days or more so they do not fall behind with schoolwork Escalate to PLC Leaders/ Wellbeing Staff if student absence concerns continue or five plus days of unexplained absence <p>Teacher or trusted adult for each student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up on all unexplained absences <u>on the same day via a phone call or Dojo message</u> to parents/carers. If absent for 2 days (unexplained), phone home. Record all attempts at contact. <p>Administrative Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure attendance and absence codes and the reasons for absence are accurately recorded Upload attendance data to CASES21 daily via Compass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor attendance and support teachers to engage with parents/carers as early as possible Ensure a trusted adult has been identified for every student Identify a designated person responsible for contacting parents/carers who have not responded to phone calls etc (usually classroom teacher) <p>Where a student’s absence concerns have been escalated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with parents/carers to discuss their child’s absences and agree on strategies for getting the student to school Encourage parents/carers to seek support and communicate regularly with teachers and other staff Ensure the trusted adult is kept informed of issues relating to the student and involved as a student advocate if the student requests Notify the School Leadership team if parents/carers refuse to engage, the student's whereabouts are unknown, or if the student has 5+ days of unexplained absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and regularly revise the school attendance policy Document staff roles and responsibilities for recording and monitoring attendance, following up on student absences and escalation processes Identify and monitor students with high absences through the PULSE Compass Dashboard and Absence Dashboard, Staying in Education Dashboard and the Student View Dashboard 	<p>Regularly communicate attendance expectations and what constitutes an acceptable absence to the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of students with improved attendance Discuss attendance data with all staff to identify trends and individual students at risk of chronic absence <p>Where a student’s absence concerns have been escalated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call the parents/carers directly to discuss barriers to attendance and how they can be addressed Send staged response school attendance letters to parents/carers who have not engaged with wellbeing staff and school leaders Escalate to the Senior Wellbeing Engagement Officer (SWEO) in the Area office for support if a student’s whereabouts is unknown or if the principal feels they have exhausted strategies for addressing absence