



Attendance Policy

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

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

Bonbeach 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 and parents are encouraged to approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Bonbeach 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 Bonbeach 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.

Supporting and promoting attendance

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

Our school also promotes student attendance by: acknowledging excellent attendance and attendance improvement at assemblies, lunch time clubs, sensory room activities, engaging teaching and learning programs and opportunities for student voice, leadership and agency.

Recording attendance

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

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

Attendance will be recorded by classroom teachers or specialist teachers at 9:00am - start of the school day and 2:30pm - after lunch, using Compass.

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

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 Bonbeach Primary School of absences by:

- Contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence, informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence, in writing or completing a Student Absence Notice if the absences will be for 3 days or greater (available on the website), or logging the reason for absence in Compass.

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, Bonbeach Primary School will notify parents by SMS. Bonbeach 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.

Bonbeach 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.

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

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 the absence learning plan is completed

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 authorised.

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, Bonbeach 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 Learning Plan or Attendance Improvement Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period

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

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Bonbeach 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 Bayside Peninsula Regional Office for further action.

If, from 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.

Appendix 1: Staged Response to Unexplained non-attendance

Appendix 2: Student Absence Process – for parents

Appendix 3: Student Absence Process – for staff

Further Information and Resources

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

Review Cycle

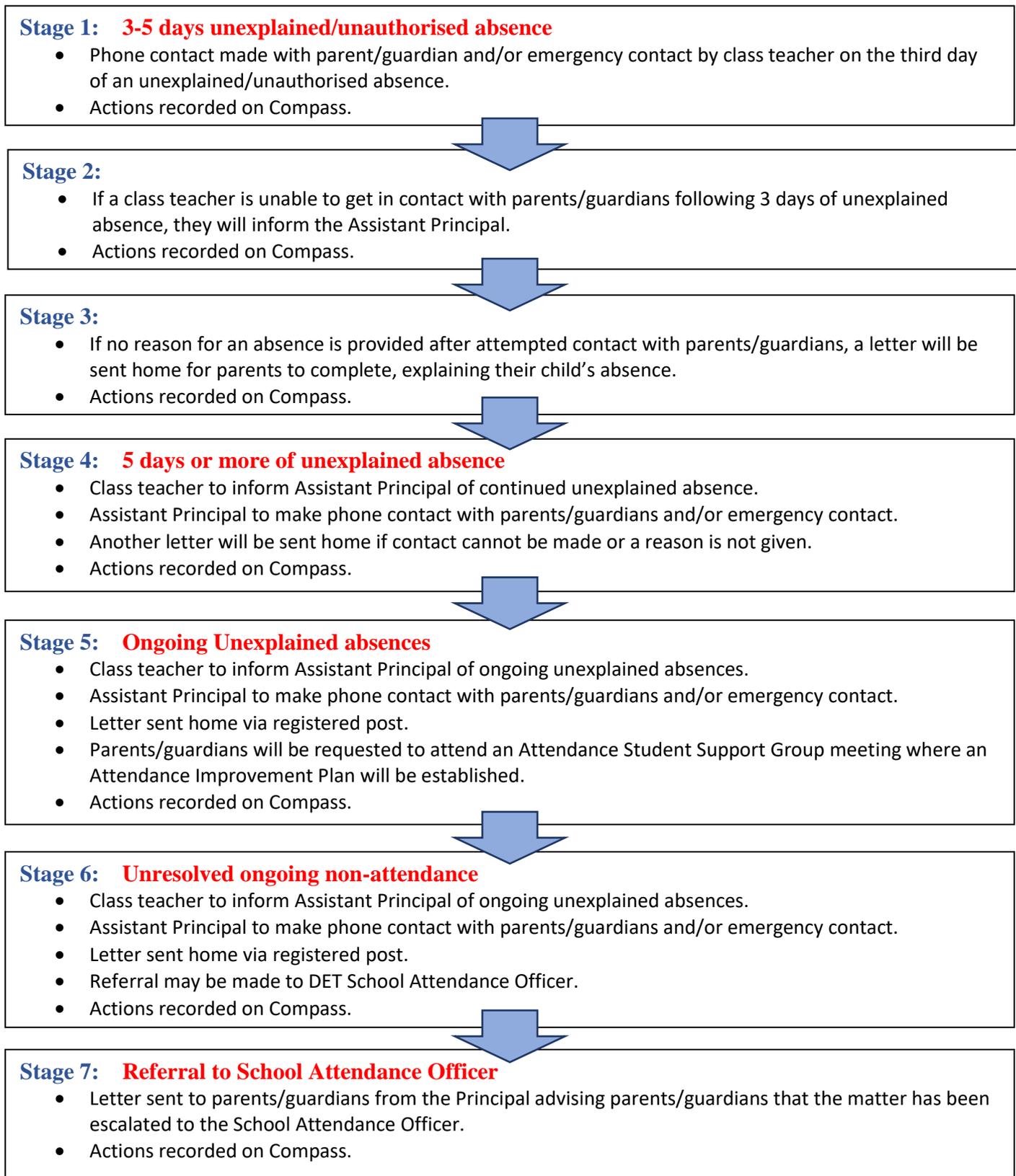
This policy was last updated in June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2023.



Staged Response to Unexplained Non-Attendance

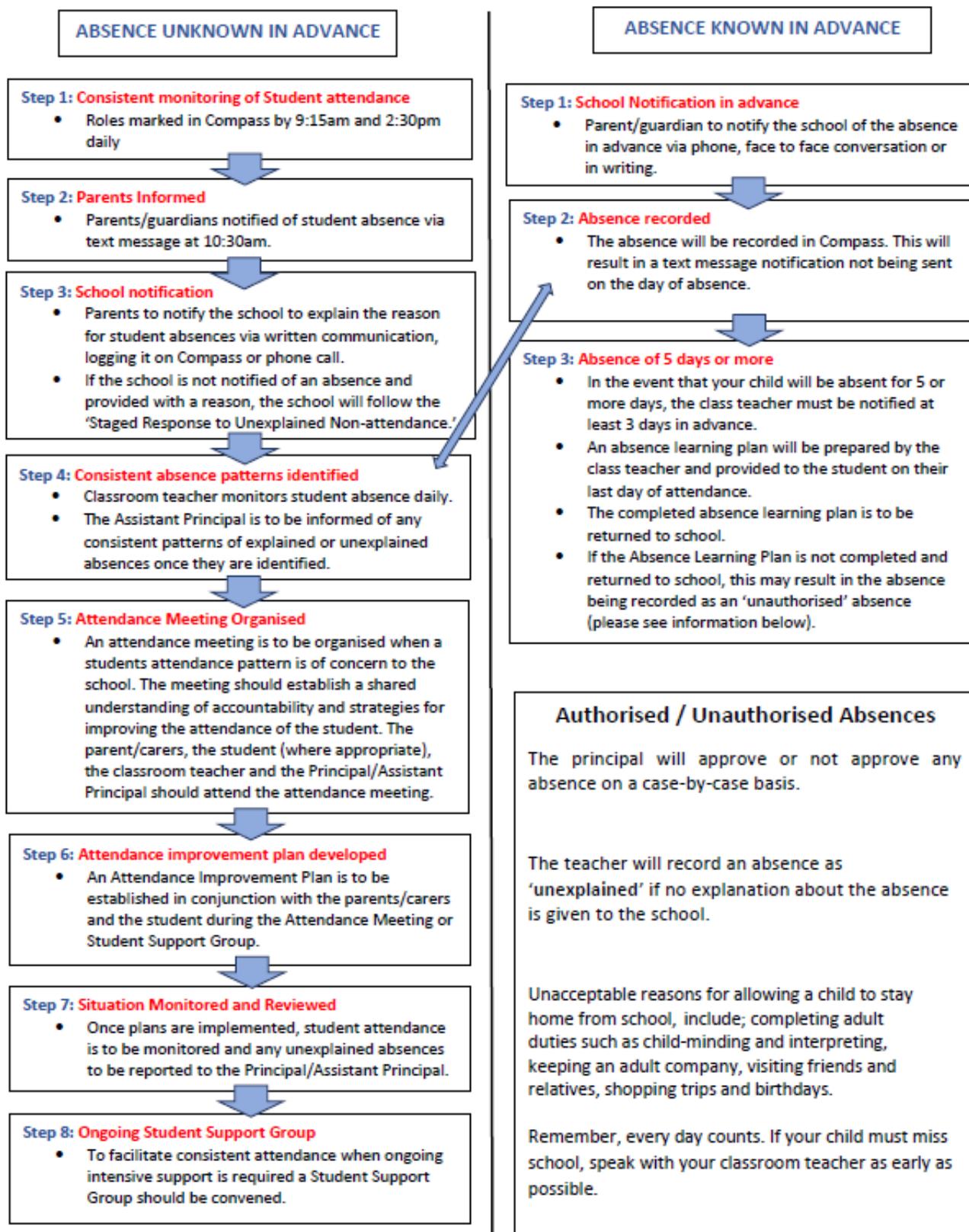
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Student Absence Process– for parents





Student Absence Process– for staff

Role marking process

Attendance rolls:

- Are an official legal document/record
- Discharge the school's duty of care for all students
- Are checked thoroughly by external enrolment auditors and DET
- Are to be marked accurately twice daily on Compass

When a classroom teacher is absent:

- On the first day, the class will be split. Team member or Assistant Principal to mark the am roll. Teachers with split students will mark a paper roll in the afternoon and send to the office.
- Where a Casual Relief Teacher (CRT) is employed, a paper copy of the roll is given each day. This is returned at the conclusion of each day and the data is entered by administration.

Marking the roll must be completed in Compass promptly at:

- 9:00am and 2:30pm

Roll marking in Compass

- Teachers will mark a student as present. If the teacher is aware of the reason for the absence, they are to inform administration who will then enter to correct code.

Late arrivals / early departure

- Students who arrive after the roll is marked at 9:00am will be marked as late arrival.
- Students who leave school early will be recorded as early departure.
- Late arrivals and early departures are entered manually into Compass by administration after a student is signed in or out on the i{ad located in administration.

Absences and contacting parents

- Class teacher to contact parent/guardian via phone on the third day of an unexplained absence. Actions to be recorded in Compass.
- If a class teacher is unable to get in contact with parents/guardians following 3 days of unexplained absence, they are to inform the Assistant Principal. Actions to be recorded in Compass.

Attendance monitoring

- Absence Summary Report will be provided to all classroom teachers each month. The data is to be tabled, discussed and actioned at team meetings each month and reviewed alongside academic data.
- Teachers are expected to monitor students who frequently arrive late and follow up with parents.
- Class teachers are to inform the Assistant Principal of any consistent patterns of explained or unexplained absences of concern.
- Staff to refer to the Staged response to unexplained non-attendance.
- Unexplained absence letters will be generated via Compass each month and sent out to families requesting that they provide an explanation for the absence.

Absences - notes

- It is a requirement to record all reasons of absence.
- If a parent informs a teacher verbally, the teacher is to inform administration so the absence can be recorded in Compass.
- All absences for 3 or more days should be provided in writing. Any absence letters should be forwarded to administration.

Extended absence

- When a child is going to be absent for 5 or more days, an absence learning plan will need to be prepared and provided to the student on their last day of attendance prior to the extended absence.
- The office staff will inform the class teacher when they are notified about any extended absences.

Attendance Meetings

If a child has above average absence rates or concerning patterns of non-attendance, it may be appropriate to arrange an attendance meeting. An attendance meeting may include the parent/guardian, student, class teacher and Principal/Assistant Principal and any outside services supporting the family.

Attendance meetings:

- Should establish a shared understanding of accountability and strategies for improving the attendance of the student.
- Should be supportive rather than disciplinary and should focus on solutions.
- Involve the student and/or parent in developing attendance goals in either in [Individual Learning Plan](#) or [Attendance Plan](#).