



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**OCTOBER  
2023**

## 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 Belle Vue Park Primary School has in place to
  - support, monitor and maintain student attendance and
  - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Belle Vue Park Primary 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 Belle Vue Park 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 Belle Vue Park 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 Belle Vue Park Primary School, or

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

Belle Vue Park 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.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**OCTOBER  
2023**

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 there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Belle Vue Park Primary School parents and carers 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 and carers will communicate with the relevant staff at Belle Vue Park Primary School about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents and carers 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**

Belle Vue Park Primary School's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by:

- Creating a positive school culture.
- Communicating high attendance expectations.
- Monitoring and following up absences.
- Providing intervention and support.

### **Recording attendance**

Belle Vue Park Primary School must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements.
- discharge Belle Vue Park Primary School's duty of care for all students.

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom/ specialist teacher at the start of the school day (before 10am) after lunch (2:30pm) using the eCases electronic system.

If students attend 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 Belle Vue Park Primary School of absences by:

- Unplanned Absences – contact the office in person, phone, or email school before 9am on the day of the absence.
- Planned Absences - inform the home group teacher via note signed by the parent/carers or call the office as soon as possible.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**OCTOBER  
2023**

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent or carer, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Belle Vue Park Primary School will notify parents by phone, SMS or email on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

Belle Vue Park 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 Belle Vue Park Primary School considers that the parent has provided a reasonable excuse for their child's absence the absence will be marked as 'parent choice school approved'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as 'unexplained 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 and
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance.

If no explanation is provided by the parent, 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, Belle Vue Park 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 student wellbeing staff (Assistant Principal) and
- for First Nation students liaise with the Koorie Engagement Support Officer (K.E.S.O.) and include a goal in the student's Koorie Education Learning Plan (K.E.L.P.)



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

### 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
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings as required
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- 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

Policy last reviewed	OCTOBER 2023
Approved by School Council on	
Next schedule review date	OCTOBER 2026