1. **Rationale:**
   1.1 The *Education Act 1958* requires that children of school age resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Regional Director.
   1.2 Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics.
   1.3 Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.
   1.4 Absenteeism in the early stages of schools often escalates into “school refusal” behaviour in later years.
   1.5 All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.

2. **Aims:**
   2.1 To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.
   2.2 To ensure that parents provide adequate notification to the school of the reasons for absences as they occur.

3. **Implementation:**
   3.1 Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
   3.2 Parents have a further responsibility to provide a written note or return a completed absence form to the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
   3.3 The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
   3.4 All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our Student Records database and communicated to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
   3.5 The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
   3.6 The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
   3.7 Where students have failed to attend for 3 days and no reason has been provided by the parents/guardians, the school will make contact with the family to ascertain the reason for the absence.
   3.8 The principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.
   3.9 Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Human Services.
   3.10 Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
4. **Evaluation:**

4.1 Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and Training and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

4.2 Department of Education auditors may audit the school’s student attendance records each year.

4.3 This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

References:
