



ATTENDANCE



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the School Office ph: 93111598.

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Dinjerra 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 Dinjerra 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 Dinjerra 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 Dinjerra Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Dinjerra Primary School for particular activities.

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



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

Dinjerra 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 Dinjerra 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

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

Our school also promotes student attendance by implementing attendance focused programs such as breakfast club, attendance awards and SWPB reward system.

Recording attendance

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

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

Attendance will be recorded by the class teacher at the start of the school day (by 9:15am) and after lunch (by 2:40pm) using Compass or a hard copy for CRTs.

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 Dinjerra Primary School of absences by:

- contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence, informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence or using the Compass app.

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, Dinjerra Primary School will notify parents by SMS. The SMS notification will encourage parents to respond to the unexplained absence either by calling the school or adjusting on Compass.



If a student has two or more unexplained absences within a fortnight, the class teacher is responsible for following up with the Office and contacting the family, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence. Class teachers will keep a record of the reason for each absence and update using the appropriate attendance code on Compass.

Class teachers will complete a Compass Chronicle for parent communication eg. 'Time absent 2 days (insert dates), phoned home, parents explained he was sick.'

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Dinjerra 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 Dinjerra Primary 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

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. Class teachers will record a note in the Wellbeing Tracker to inform the Wellbeing Team, explaining the steps taken to communicate with the student's family.

Where the school has been unable to contact the parent, a signed absence letter will be mailed to the family notifying them to contact the school in relation to their child's 'unexplained absence'. When the school has serious concerns about a student's attendance, the concern will be raised at the Health and Wellbeing Key Contact meetings to begin the referral pathway to the region's truancy and re-engagement officer.

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, Dinjerra Primary School will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- conducting a wellbeing check-in with the student with either the PWO or the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader
- ; updating the Compass Chronicle with their actions to inform the class teacher
- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group with the Wellbeing Team, class teacher and parents
- implementing a Re-Engagement School Plan
- implementing an Individual Education Plan
- arranging for assistance from the Wellbeing Team



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

Attendance and Punctuality For your child to make optimal gains in learning and feel connected with his/her peer group, it is essential that he/she attends school on a regular basis. We communicate this information around attendance and punctuality because we understand its importance for the learning and wellbeing of every child.

Gold Star 99-100% 0-2 Days	Green for Go 96-98% 3-4 Days	Amber - Take Care 93-95% 5-6 Days	Red Alert 86-92% 7-12 Days	Danger! under 86% 13 Days or More
Students with this consistently high attendance record are most likely to take advantage of the best learning opportunities.	Students consistently on "Green for Go" are better placed to achieve the outcomes that will give them real opportunities.	These students will be missing or late for up to 20 school days a year. A child with this attendance or lateness rate could miss up to or over 1 year of schooling between Prep and Year 10.	Students consistently missing this much school could miss out on up to 2 whole years of school between Prep and Year 12. Students will find it difficult to reach their education potential and maintain connectedness to school.	Students with this consistent and dangerously high absenteeism or lateness rate could miss over two and a half years of schooling (or more!) between Prep and Year 10. Missing so much time makes it difficult to keep in touch with learning programs and greatly affects social skills.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Dinjerra 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 School Attendance Officer in the South-Western Victoria Regional office for further action.

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

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
- 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	May 2025
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2029