



Rosewood Downs Primary School

Attendance Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Rosewood Downs Primary School on 03 9795 3744 or rosewood.downs.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

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

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

Rosewood Downs 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 approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Rosewood Downs 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 Rosewood Downs 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.

1. Supporting and promoting attendance

Rosewood Downs Primary School's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by:

Students: The school promotes attendance by fostering student belonging and engagement through initiatives such as breakfast club, a Year 6 and Prep buddy program, scheduled Year 6 leaders supporting Prep students at lunchtime, a range of lunchtime clubs (including Green Team, gardening, LEGO, Social Skills, Coding, Choir and Art), student leadership opportunities, access to sports equipment, allocated playground access times for year levels, and an outdoor library and beanbags for lunchtime use. Attendance is also encouraged through recognition at weekly assemblies for the class with the highest attendance, acknowledgement in the school newsletter, and attendance awards presented at the end-of-year assembly.

Families: The school works in partnership with families to support regular attendance. Unexplained absences are followed up with daily phone calls from the administration team, and families receive information about the importance of attendance through the school newsletter and other communications. Where attendance begins to trend downward, early contact is made with families through email or phone to provide an attendance "nudge". Where additional support is required, the school may meet with families to develop temporary modified return-to-school plans and may liaise with external services, including Orange Door, to support families experiencing barriers to attendance.

Attendance Data analysis: Attendance patterns are monitored and responded to through established school processes. The school maintains a designated attendance leadership role responsible for monitoring attendance patterns and coordinating follow-up actions. Staff use an attendance tracking document to record communication with families and track supports in place. Dedicated fortnightly Professional Learning Community (PLC) time is used to analyse attendance data and identify and respond to emerging attendance concerns.

2. Recording attendance

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

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

Attendance will be recorded by classroom teachers at 9am and 1pm using Compass Education.

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

3. Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents and carers should notify Rosewood Downs Primary School of student absences by contacting the administration office or by submitting an attendance note through the Compass parent portal. The attendance note should include the start and end dates of the absence, the reason for the absence (*listed below as reasons that are at the principal's discretion to accept*).

For planned absences longer than five school days, parents and carers must complete a *Notification of Extended Leave* form available from the Front Office.

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, Rosewood Downs Primary School will send a Compass notification to parents. The school will attempt to contact parents at approximately 10:00 am on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent or carer due to incorrect or outdated contact details, the school will attempt to contact any emergency contacts nominated on the student's record, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Rosewood Downs 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](#) (Vic) and the [School Attendance Guidelines](#).

If Rosewood Downs 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 provided by a parent or carer for a student's absence. The Principal will generally approve absences for the following reasons:

- Medical or 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 where a student is required to attend Sorry Business.
- School refusal, where a plan is in place with the parent or carer to address the causes and support the student's return to school.
- Religious or cultural observance, where the parent or carer notifies the school in advance.
- Family holidays, where the parent or carer 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.

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

4. 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, Rosewood Downs 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 attendance leadership, and classroom teacher.

We understand 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,

5. Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Rosewood Downs 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 SOUTH-EASTERN VICTORIA Victoria Region 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 and newsletter
- Included in staff induction processes and staff term guides
- 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

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Attendance](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2026
Consultation	Consulted with School Council 21/04/2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before March 2030 [month, year – noting a 4-year review cycle]