POLICY TITLE: Student Attendance Policy

DATE RATIFIED: 2007

REVIEW DATE: 2010

RATIONALE
School age students (six to fifteen years) are required to be in full-time attendance at a Victorian government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, have a shared enrolment with a specialist setting, have received exemption from the Regional Director (Schools) or are enrolled in correspondence education.

International research demonstrates a strong correlation between student learning, longer-term life outcomes, attendance at school and appropriate participation in education programs. It is crucial that students develop habits of regular attendance from the time they commence school. Poor patterns of attendance can place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations. Once learners have begun to absent themselves from school, and the initial cause of this remains undetected or unexplored, it is likely that the pattern of absence will continue and escalate through the subsequent school career.

PURPOSE
Essendon North Primary School is committed to improving the attendance rates of all students. Specific processes will be followed to maximise learning opportunities by ensuring absenteeism of students is kept to a minimum. All those involved in the education of students will manage absenteeism using agreed procedures. Procedures and processes will be communicated to parents on a regular basis, and full-attendance will be actively encouraged by all staff.

IMPLEMENTATION
- All enrolled students are expected to attend daily and on time.
- Class teachers will mark the attendance roll at 8:45am and 1:45pm each day.
- Attendance records will be entered into CASES 21 and trends analysed.
- Attendance, absence and late arrival records will form part of each child’s half-year and end of year progress reports to parents.
- Parents of absent students are required to provide written notification, stating the reason/s for absence. This information is to be retained by the classroom teacher and then archived for a period of time by the school.
- Staff members are to bring to the attention of the Assistant Principal any student/s whose attendance is irregular, any students who do not provide adequate information explaining absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.
- In the case of poor attendance, the Assistant Principal will consult with the teacher and review attendance records to decide upon the strategy to be employed. As truancy is often indicative of other problems including
engagement and family issues, the support strategies employed by the Assistant Principal will be determined on a case-by-case basis. However, they may include:

- Initial telephone contact with parents
- Counselling sessions for parents and/or students
- Home visits
- Formation of a support group
- School attendance as a prerequisite to extra-curricular activities
- Attendance rewards

- Newsletter articles will highlight absence issues and explain the consequences.
- Ongoing truancy issues will be reported to the Principal, and to the appropriate welfare and Government agencies.

**EVALUATION**

The Attendance Policy will be reviewed in 2010.