Rationale:

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 sets out the basic legal requirements for attendance. In Victoria, young people between 6 and 16 years of age inclusive must be enrolled in a registered school or registered for home schooling in accordance with the Act and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007.

There is a legal requirement for schools to keep records of student attendance. All students are expected to attend on all designated school days unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.

Regular attendance at school enables students to maximise their full educational potential and to actively participate and engage in their learning. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. Students who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on fundamental aspects of their educational and social development.

Aims:

• To ensure that there are agreed processes for managing student absences at Mornington Park Primary School.
• To encourage parents, carers, students and school staff to work together to minimise absences.

Implementation:

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

• Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, are punctual and are only absent if ill or for any other valid reason.
• Parents/carers of absent students are required to provide an explanation of the absence. This should be received on the day of the absence. A written explanation must be forwarded to the school when the student returns explaining why an absence has occurred.
• Parents/carers must ensure that if a student leaves early or arrives late, the student must report to the Administration Office to be signed out, or in, and collect a Late Pass which they will take to their classroom teacher.
• If a student is reluctant to attend school, parents/carers should contact their child’s classroom teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal who may enlist the help of the School Social Worker or other nominee in supporting the student’s return to school

Responsibility of Mornington Park Primary School

• Mornington Park Primary School has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored
• The roll will be marked by classroom teachers at the commencement of each morning and afternoon. This information is then forwarded to the Administration Officer, aggregated on the Student Records Data Base “Cases 21” and communicated to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
• If a student arrives late, the Administration Officer will sign the child in and issue them with a Late Pass. If the roll has already been marked by the time a child arrives, teachers are required to remark the roll to indicate that the child has arrived late. If a student arrives late after the roll has been sent to the Administration Office, the roll will be adjusted at the Office. All rolls should reach the Office by 3pm each day
• Written notifications (letters) from parents or carers should be received, signed, dated and filed in the roll folder for collection and filing at the office. If a parent rings or speaks to a teacher personally, this should also be recorded as per a written notification.
• Classroom teachers will complete an Absenteeism proforma at the end of the school day alerting the school Principal where a child is absent for more than 2 days without a satisfactory explanation. The Absenteeism proforma will indicate whether the classroom teacher has made contact, or is going to make contact, with the child’s family or whether assistance is required to do this. Best practice would indicate that teachers who contact families in the first instance can often achieve a satisfactory return to school with the minimum of delay
• The Administration Officer will send out letters to parents/carers of children whose absences remain unexplained after a period of 2 weeks requesting an explanation
• Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in the organisation of a formal attendance meeting with the family to discuss attendance issues and support a satisfactory return to school
• The Principal may enlist the support of others such as the Assistant Principal, School Social Worker or other nominee in contacting the parents/carers of students with a high level of unexplained or unapproved absences
• The Principal will contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Southern Metropolitan Region should the absence of a student reach a level that places their learning at risk, and no reasonable explanation has been provided to the school and the child’s attendance has not improved
• The Administration Officer will provide daily “Absence Reports” to the Principal noting any trends in data
• The school will notify parents/carers in writing of those days when students are not required to attend school
• The school will periodically remind parents/carers of their responsibilities in regards to attendance via the school newsletter, assemblies, parent/carers information evenings and parent/carers-teacher meetings. They will be required to sign a copy of the Attendance Policy to indicate their understanding of and agreement with the Policy
• Student attendance and absence figures, plus the number of times late to school will appear on student’s half yearly and end of year reports
Responsibility of Students

- Students are expected to attend school every day and be punctual for all classes, programs, commitments and organised activities unless they have a valid reason to be absent
- Students must sign in at the Administration Office if they arrive late and take a late pass to the class teacher
- Students needing to leave school early must be signed out by their parent/carer at the Administration Office

Evaluation:

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development auditors will audit the school’s attendance records each year
- The Attendance policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle