



**UPWEY SOUTH**  
Primary School

## Student Absences Policy

### Changes to Absenteeism Policy

Over the school holidays Minister for Education James Merlino announced changes to the School Attendance Guidelines whereby Government schools notify parents of unexplained student absence, as soon as practicable, on the day of absence. Prior to the announcement, Government schools were advised to attempt to make contact with the parent within three days of an unexplained student absence.

Many Victorian Government schools already notify parents on the day when a student is absent, however the Department will work with Government schools so that they can implement this change by the end of Term 2 2018. At the end of last year I was invited to be part of a working party to discuss the logistics and management of this change. We met once last year where it was made clear that the minister would be changing the absenteeism reporting policy. At this initial meeting I presented a number of factors to be considered such as:

- costs and logistics for schools associated with texting/phoning families who fail to report their child's absence
- responsibility of the school to follow through if no response was received from a parent/guardian
- publicly promoting parents to be the first notifiers of a child's absence
- complexity of dealing with custodial restrictions

It is my understanding that there will be further meetings about this change and I will continue to update you on through the e-letter.

For more information on school attendance guidelines visit:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/attendance.aspx>