

# Attendance Policy

## Purpose

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted. Daily school attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation is important as it 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 which set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

## Aim

- To maximise learning opportunities by ensuring that student absenteeism is kept to a minimum and only occurs for acceptable reasons.
- To put in place agreed processes for managing student absences within the College.
- To inform all members of the College community of the strong link between attendance and student achievement.
- To ensure that students, parents, teachers and the community understand their respective responsibilities in regard to school attendance.

## Implementation

- Students are expected to maintain 95% attendance.
- All enrolled students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and activities each day, including whole school sporting events.
- Students arriving to school late are required to sign in with their House Support Officer. Those who are frequently late will be issued with a Punctuality Plan and expected to redeem the time as determined by the House Leader.
- Each teacher is required to mark their class roll on Compass at the start of each period.
- Attendance discrepancy information is returned to the House Support Officer who checks the discrepancies and follows up any unapproved absences with the relevant teaching staff. CASES21 is updated during the day using this information.
- House Support Officers are required to make contact with the parents or guardians of students who have unexplained absences.
- House Support Officers will inform the relevant House Leader and/or Wellbeing Leader of students whose attendance is irregular, who has not provided adequate explanation of absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.
- Students are not permitted to absent themselves from the College any time during the school day.
- Where possible, parents should inform the College in advance of upcoming absences.
- All absences must be explained by a parent/guardian in writing or a phone call and must be *approved* by the principal or their representative.
- Parents must write to the College to seek approval for family holidays or extended absences that are planned during the school term. Approval will be granted based on appropriate conditions being met, including a student support group meeting and the establishment of a Student Absence Learning Plan.
- The principal will advise in writing if an absence has not been approved.

The principal will not excuse absences, where:

- approval had not been sought in advance or in accordance with school policy

- the student was absent due to participating in leisure or social activities without approval
- the conditions of approval have not been met (e.g. Student Absence Learning Plan for a family holiday not completed)
- the parent has provided no explanation for the absences

The principal will not excuse absences such as:

- Birthday celebrations, shopping trips, caring for younger siblings or family friends, music festival or concerts, or where the explanation offered is 'personal reasons'.
- If the absence is for more than two consecutive days, the note from the parent must be accompanied by a medical certificate.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's review cycle

**Related policies:** School Policy Advisory Guide – <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

*This policy was endorsed by the College Council in June, 2016*