



Attendance Policy

1. Rationale

The aim of this policy is to encourage students to come to school each and every day. Regular attendance at school provides students with the strong foundations necessary to develop academic skills and emotional and social connections. Students develop good habits by attending school every day – habits that are necessary to succeed after school, whether in the workplace or in further study.

The policy will apply to all students of the College.

2. Aims

- To promote positive attendance behaviours in all students & parents/guardians.
- To improve student learning outcomes.
- To promote punctuality.
- To clearly differentiate between approved and unapproved absences from class and school.
- To reward the efforts and work of students when they successfully complete a year level and recognize through reports and promotion to the next year level.
- To promote the policy in conjunction with the College's other policies, especially the Promotion Policies at Years 9, 10 and 11.
- To eliminate deliberate truancy.

3. Attendance requirements

3.1 Students are required to attend all timetabled classes and school based activities.

3.2 All students must maintain at least a 90% attendance rate in each subject or unit of work.

Exemptions or variations to this policy may be made for students with special circumstances (see Clause 8: Applications for Exemptions).

4. Implications of failing to meet requirements

If, due to excessive absences, a student does not comply with this policy, an interview will be held with Engagement Leaders and parents/guardians of the student to discuss the strategies to improve future attendance and/or pathway options available to the student for the following year.

5. Types of absences and their impact on these requirements.

5.1 Absences of all types - parent approved (excluding illness), unapproved, suspensions and truancy – will normally count towards the overall school absences (see below for some key exceptions).

Parents/guardians will still be expected to formally notify the College via Compass, telephone or in writing of an absence and the reasons for this absence.

5.2 Key exceptions to this policy include:

- College sanctioned activities. These include activities such as: interschool sport, sport development program activities, music lessons, College productions and performances, excursions, camps, work placements, student meetings, counselling, community based activities and other activities as determined by the Principal. The College will make the final decision on what activities can be part of this group.
- Legitimate illness - medical certificates need to be handed in within five days of the student's return to school.



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Note:

- a. Due to the nature of some work/subjects it may not be possible to catch up on work missed and therefore the achievement of learning outcomes may not be possible.
- b. Students will be expected to catch up on the work missed through these absences as determined by their classroom teacher.
- c. If a student has poor attendance, they may not be able to participate in extra-curricular activities that interrupt regular classes.

6. Late arrival

- 6.1 All students are expected to arrive on time for school and for all classes.
- 6.2 Students should be in Home Group by 8.50am and should attend class within 3 minutes of change of classes.
- 6.3 Students who arrive at scheduled classes later than these times will be entered on the roll as late. Parents are able to check this information on Compass.
- 6.4 Habitual lateness will be monitored by the Year Level Coordinator who will follow up with students.

7. Truancy

- 7.1 Truancy is a deliberate absence initiated by a student without the knowledge or consent of their parents/guardians.
- 7.2 Truancy occurs when a student misses a scheduled lesson or activity, regardless of whether or not they remain on school grounds, or when they return to school after an unauthorized departure.
- 7.3 Truancy is regarded as a serious matter as it involves deliberate dishonesty.
- 7.4 Truancy is assumed to have occurred when a student has attended sessions at school during the day (such as home group or period 1) and then, without signing out of the College, has not attended their classes or scheduled activity.
- 7.5 Truancy will be monitored on a daily basis by the Year Level Coordinators and followed up with appropriate behavioural consequences.

8. Applications for exemptions to the policy

The College, at its discretion, and only in exceptional circumstances, may grant exemptions to this policy.

- Authorised absences with medical certificate. Certificates must be submitted to the College within five school days of the student returning to school. The College reserves the right to verify the authenticity of medical certificates.
- Extended leave. Parents/guardians are required to apply in writing to their child's Engagement Leader using the Application for Leave form. This must be submitted four weeks prior to leave.
- Major religious and cultural events. A note from the parent/guardian is required.

9. Expectations in relation to this policy.

9.1 Students are expected to:

- attend school and all scheduled classes and activities;
- arrive on time to school (8.50am) and to every class/activity;
- inform their classroom teachers in advance of their involvement in College sanctioned activities that will result in their absence from class;
- following an absence, catch up on any work missed or complete any alternative set work.



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9.2 Parents/Guardians are required to:

- ensure that their child attends all scheduled classes and activities every day;
- ensure that their child is on time for Home Group at 8.50am every day;
- notify the College via Compass, by telephone or in writing, of the reason for any absence as soon as possible on the first day of any absence;
- where appropriate, provide the College with medical certificates for their child;
- apply to the Engagement Leader (one month prior to departure) in writing of the dates of any extended holiday that will cause their child to be absent from school;
- support their child's learning by complying with a Student Absence Learning Plan during continued or prolonged absences;
- work cooperatively with the school to improve their child's attendance where the reasons for absences have been deemed unsatisfactory by the school;
- ensure that their contact details are correct and up to date;
- where necessary, take an active part in this Policy's interview and exemption processes related to attendance.

9.3 Teachers will:

- accurately monitor and record student attendance on Compass for every class/activity, including extras (within the first 10 minutes in class);
- provide appropriate work for students during prolonged absences as requested by the Engagement Leader;
- send "At Risk" letters to parents/guardians of students who are at risk of unsatisfactory completion, and record actions on Compass.

9.4 Year Level Coordinators and Engagement Leaders will:

- Year Level Coordinators will use Compass to monitor attendance. They will discuss poor attendance with students and/or parents as early as possible to avoid the academic consequences of habitual absences;
- contact the parent/guardian about student absences if the student is truanting or the attendance rate falls under 90%;
- if, for any reason, the parent/guardian cannot be contacted on the day, follow up the absence with the student on their return and record on Compass;
- develop a Student Absence Learning Plan when a student will be absent from school for an extended period of time;
- send a letter to parents/guardians at the end of each term showing all unexplained absences and late arrivals for their child which will need to be filled in by the parent/guardian and returned to school for entry onto Compass.

9.5 Text Messages via Compass:

A text message in the form of an SMS will be sent to parents via Compass when a student is absent from school.

9.6 The Principal/Leadership Team will:

- promote student attendance through clear statements of expectations to parents/guardians, students and staff;
- promote awareness through assemblies, posters, staff meetings and newsletters, that absence results in lost learning time and opportunities;



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- ensure whole-school modelling of punctuality to school and classes;
- ensure accurate and timely recording of attendance by staff in each class each day;
- maintain accurate attendance records and ensure the prompt processing of all student transfers.

10. Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school review cycle.