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# Attendance Policy



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## Rationale

The Department of Education and Training (DET) requires that children of school age (six to seventeen years) are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless formally exempt. Our College requires that post-compulsory aged students also attend school unless a valid reason exists.

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. Children and young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes across their lives. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age.

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.

Conversely, limited school participation is associated with a greater chance of dropping out of school, disruptive and delinquent behaviour and may lead to a cycle of rebellion against authority. These outcomes have later implications for employment, a range of health risk behaviours (drug and alcohol abuse), homelessness, poverty, welfare dependence, and involvement in the justice system.

## Implementation

- Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult.
- Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure at school.
- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary. Parents/guardians have a further responsibility to provide a written note to the school explaining why an absence has occurred the day the student returns. Approval of absences other than illness, are at the discretion of the Principal.
- A student is required to be in attendance at school when involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the College (for example an excursion or camp), or where the student is engaged in a re-engagement program
- An attendance officer will be responsible for monitoring and investigating student absences with the relevant Head of School.
- Parents/guardians of students who are to be absent are required to telephone the 24hr hotline or email the school ([attendance@scoresbyvic.edu.au](mailto:attendance@scoresbyvic.edu.au)) before 8.30 am to report the absence. The absence is then to be confirmed in writing by a note from parents/guardians.
- Independent students not living with parents or guardians are also required to provide notes.
- The attendance officer will telephone parents/guardians of absent students. If communication from parents/guardians is not forthcoming, this call will be followed up by the Head of School.
- Unexplained or inadequately explained absences will result in the Head of School communicating with parents/guardians and the student involved so as to implement strategies that will resolve the problem.
- VCE students must attend a minimum of 90% of classes to be eligible for a pass subjects they are enrolled in.
- Students undertaking VET programs in VCE or VCAL are required to meet the minimum requirements for the relevant program. This includes off campus classes and work placement where applicable.
- The College will not approve repeated absence requests for vacations taken during the College term that may impact on long term educational outcomes for students particularly at VCE. All requests for leave other than illness/medical are required in writing a minimum of six weeks prior to the event for consideration. This period is required for the establishment of an absence-learning plan and also to consider any likely impact on the students learning and assessment.

- Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues of post-compulsory students may result in referral to the Department attendance officer. Unresolved attendance issues for students required to attend will result in year level failure and may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services.
- The Principal will ensure all student absences are recorded during each class by teachers, these are aggregated on the schools database and communicated to the Department of Education as required.
- The Department of Education and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records.
- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and Training and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

This policy was ratified at School Council in September 2016

To be reviewed September 2017