

Attendance Policy

Policy Statement

The aims of this policy are

- To maximise learning opportunities by ensuring student absenteeism is kept to a minimum
- To put in place agreed processes for managing student absences within the school
- To create a parent culture that views regular school attendance and communication of student absences to the school as important

Rationale

Students of school age (6 to 17 years) that reside in Victoria are required to be in full time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, have a shared enrolment with a specialist setting, have received exemption from the Regional Director or are enrolled in correspondence education. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation 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 that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Implementation

Teachers will:

Accurately mark rolls at 9.00am and 12.00pm daily using Compass and/or a paper roll. This is to meet legislative requirements and discharge our duty of care for all students.

If students are in attendance at a school-approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Follow up on persistent lateness

Monitor student attendance and contact parents or inform Assistant Principal if there are frequent absences

Reinforce the message of "It's not OK to be Away"

Parents will:

Ensure their child is at school every day unless there is a legitimate reason for the child's absence

Provide an explanation for their child's absence (letter, email, Compass) and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Students will:

Attend school regularly

Supply teachers with a note from their parent explaining each absence if appropriate

The Assistant Principal will:

Follow up attendance of those students identified as having unsatisfactory attendance or persistent lateness

Place articles in the newsletter about school attendance.

At Croydon Hills we consider attendance less than 90% to be detrimental to the student's education and a letter will be sent home.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

If a student is absent on a particular day and a parent has not previously notified the school, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Office staff will notify parents by SMS as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence.

A record of the reason given for each absence will be kept. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If the Principal considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused absence**'.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student
- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance

If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, the school will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Learning Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Croydon Hills Primary decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer for further action.



References:

DET Guidelines

It's Not OK to be Away –Victorian Government

[School Attendance Guidelines](#)

School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)

Review

As part of school's cyclic process