

East Loddon P-12 College

ATTENDANCE

POLICY

Rationale:

- International research demonstrates a strong correlation between students' learning, longer-term life outcomes, attendance at school and appropriate participation in education programs.
- It is crucial that children and students develop habits of regular attendance at an early age; even from the time they are enrolled in a pre-school setting.
- Poor patterns of attendance place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations.
- Once learners have begun to absent themselves from pre-school or school, and the initial cause of this remains undetected or unexplored, it is likely that the pattern of absence will continue and escalate through the subsequent school career.

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* sets out basic legal requirements for attendance. In Victoria, young people between six and 17 years of age (inclusive) must be enrolled in a registered school or registered for home schooling in accordance with the Act and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007*.

Aims:

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.
- To monitor student attendance and provide support for students with attendance problems.

Implementation:

- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have a further responsibility to provide a written note or phone call to the school explaining why an absence has occurred. Illness is reasonable grounds for an absence, whilst shopping excursions or birthday parties are not considered appropriate against the educational requirements for an education.
- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- All student absences are recorded in the morning by teachers and monitored during the day by administrative staff via the sign-in and sign-out book. All attendance and non-attendance is aggregated on the CASES 21 database and communicated to DEECD whose enrolment auditors may seek to audit student attendance records.
- The College will actively participate in DEECD initiatives such as “It’s not OK to be away”.
- The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained or followed up with parents.
- Home Group teachers, sub-school leaders, office staff and the student welfare leader will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. *Liaison with the Principal / Assistant Principal will occur when serious concerns about attendance continue.*
 - Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a report to the DEECD Regional Director who is the designated attendance officer in

accordance with DEECD guidelines which are available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>

- Student attendance and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the DEECD and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

Year 11/12 students

- A minimum of 80% attendance is required by all students undertaking VCE, VET and VCAL studies. A medical certificate will be required to explain absence from School Assessed Coursework or School Assessed Tasks. All other absences need to be explained by a note from parents or phone contact with the office.
- Curriculum related absences, such as for work placements and training requirements will be notified to the sub-school co-ordinator and teachers may arrange for alternative work completion and timelines to ensure requirements for all subjects can be met.
- Attendance requirements will be published in the Student Handbook and brought to the attention of students at the start of the year by the Senior School Leader.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

August 2014

