



Purpose

Lyndhurst Secondary College aims to ensure that all enrolled students attend school regularly, in order to maximise access to the learning opportunities provided by the College. The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the processes used to monitor student attendance.

Statement

Daily school attendance is important for all young people, to ensure that they succeed in education and that they do not fall behind either socially or developmentally. Young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12, or an equivalent qualification, generally have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes and higher incomes throughout their lives. It is important that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age.

Lyndhurst Secondary College acknowledges the importance of school participation as it maximises life opportunities for 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.

Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled during normal school hours every day of each term, unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

A student is considered to be in attendance at school when involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the school (for example; an excursion or camp), or where the student is enrolled in a re-engagement program or another school part time to make up full time attendance.

All classroom teachers are expected to mark the roll every period and record this on the computerised attendance package (Compass). It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to make sure their rolls are marked on Compass in the first 30 minutes of each lesson. Every day, an automated text

message will be sent to families, whose child is absent by 9.30am, notifying them of their child's absence.

All staff should refer to the College '[Process Map For Following Up Absences](#)' (attached).

Procedures

Student Absence: Years 7-12

The College will use a designated staff member to ensure all unexplained absences are followed up. Absence explanation can be done in a number of ways:

- A note is brought from home explaining the absence (these notes must be either given to the Attendance Officer or handed to the student's HGT).
- The parents are contacted by phone, via a text message or phone conversation, by the dedicated staff member, and written confirmation may be completed and returned to the Attendance Officer. Otherwise, the Attendance Officer may be notified verbally. The Attendance Officer will then record the absence using the appropriate reason code on Compass.
- Parents are able to log on to the parent portal on Compass to explain their child's absence.
- Parents are sent an email and/or Unexplained Absence Letter asking them to contact the school to explain their child's absence.

Please note: Parents of students in Years 7-9 may also choose to notify the school of an absence via the Absence Line (5996 0144). The Attendance Officer will then record the absence using the appropriate reason code on Compass.

Student Absence Senior Sub-School: Years 10 -12

In addition to the general Years 7-12 absence notification procedures, additional processes must be followed by students in the senior school. This is due to the fact that attendance is linked to whether or not a student satisfactorily completes a unit of study (this will include Year 10 students enrolled in any VCE unit). The process used to manage student attendance in the Senior Sub-School is outlined below:

- When a student is absent, he/she is required to provide a written explanation from a parent/carer upon return to the College, **but no later than ten school days** after the student's return to the College. Explanations must be presented to the Sub School Team, via the box located in the General Office. Senior Sub School Leaders will then make the necessary changes on Compass.
- It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent/carer to provide evidence of legitimate absences. It is the College's prerogative to determine the legitimacy of any explanation. Family holidays are not generally regarded as an **authorised** absence; requests for exemption made in advance may be considered. Parents are able to **'approve'** (explain) their student's absence on Compass, but the Sub School Team determine whether it is appropriate to **'authorise'** the absence.
- It is the student's responsibility to inform classroom teachers that a note has been given to the Sub School team for authorisation. Classroom teachers will then check, via Compass, and adjust their class roll appropriately.
- An **'authorised absence'** would typically be one of the following: a short term illness - documented by a note from parent/carer; an absence caused by family trauma or a legal matter, documented by a

note from a parent or an authorized person; or an extended illness documented by a medical certificate. **Medical certificates** should be provided for absences in excess of three school days. **Medical certificates** must be provided when a Year 10, 11 or 12 student misses a SAC or exam.

- Students living independently will be responsible for providing their own notes, but medical certificates or supporting evidence may be required.
- When a student has reached **two ‘unauthorised absences’** during the semester for any particular unit/subject, parents/carers will be **notified by the classroom teacher**, who will also brief the HGT. This contact with the parents should also be recorded on Compass via a chronicle entry.
- Year 10 students with **seven or more unauthorised absences** for a subject, per semester, will have **‘Unsatisfactory Attendance’ (N)** recorded on their Semester Report.
- All students undertaking a VCE/VCAL unit of study with **seven or more ‘unauthorised absences’** for a subject, per semester, will be assessed with an N – that is, they will not meet the requirements to pass the subject. If a student accumulates six unauthorised absences in a unit of work, the class teacher must send a **‘Senior School Attendance Letter’** to the parent/carer.
- Further, if fifteen **‘authorised/unauthorised’** absences are recorded in a semester for a VCAL/VCE unit, this too will mean an ‘N’ result. A note provided at the end of semester is not acceptable. Absences can only be **approved** by following the above procedures. In the case of a Year 10 student, they will have **‘Unsatisfactory Attendance’** recorded on their Semester Reports. Consideration will be given where extenuating circumstances may exist (eg: ongoing illness). In such cases, the Sub-School Leader and Assistant Principal will determine if recording an ‘N’ result is appropriate.
- Where attendance in a number of units continues to be unsatisfactory, the student’s enrolment in the College may be withdrawn or referred to Careers, MIPS and/or the Wellbeing Team. The student may be able to re-enrol in the College at the beginning of the next semester or the following year.
- If a Year 12 student needs to leave school early for a *valid reason*, they must sign the Senior Sub-School **Early Leavers Book** (located in the Senior Study Area), or sign out in the General Office. A *valid reason* would include one of the following situations: senior students leaving school with written permission from a parent/carer, or Year 12 students leaving school early if their teacher is absent at the end of the day or if they have no scheduled classes at the end of the day.

Students Withdrawn from Class

It is the Sub-School’s responsibility to notify relevant classroom teachers and the Attendance Officer when students are withdrawn from formal classes, so that this can be recorded on Compass.

Key Stake Holders/persons affected	School Community
Person/Group responsible for Policy Review	Principal Class, Sub-School Leaders
Review Cycle	Biennial Last Reviewed: June 2017 Next Review: June 2019
Associated Processes	Referral processes to MIPS, Careers and Wellbeing
Associated Support Documentation	DET School Attendance Guideline

Appendix 1

The **Education and Training Reform Act 2006** describes a reasonable excuse for a student not attending school as being due to:

- Illness, accident, an unforeseen event or an unavoidable cause
- A requirement to comply with another law
- The child's absence from Victoria
- There is no Government school within a prescribed distance of the child's residence and the child is receiving a distance education program from a registered school
- The child is undertaking an education program provided by a registered education and training organisation
- The child has been suspended or expelled and is undertaking other educational programs provided by the Department or another registered school
- The child's absence from school was because of the child's disobedience and was not due to any fault of the parent
- The child is attending or observing a religious event or obligation as a result of a genuinely held belief of the child or parent of the child
- The child is exempted from attendance at school by the Minister