

# Mallacoota P-12 College

## Student Attendance Policy

### Policy

Mallacoota P-12 College will undertake whole of school strategies to facilitate regular school attendance. This enables students to actively engage and connect in their learning, build relationships with peers and teachers and provide themselves with every opportunity to achieve their personal best.

Note: The National Youth Participation Requirement requires that all young people under the age of 17 must complete year 10 and then participate full-time (25 hours per week, or as deemed full-time by the course provider) in approved education, training or employment; or a combination of these activities until they reach 17 years of age.

### Procedures

#### Shared Expectations:

- It is expected that parents/carers ensure that their child attends school at all times and is punctual each day.
- It is expected and encouraged that parents/carers notify the school as soon as possible of their child's absence. Where absence is known in advance, the school should be notified as early as possible so that the information can be recorded on the administration system, and the relevant personnel notified.
- The school and parents/carers will work cooperatively to develop strategies to improve attendance.
- It is expected that teachers will leave relevant work if they are to be away.
- It is expected the teachers provide work for students who are planning to be away from school for an extended period.
- It is an expectation that students that miss classes due other commitments, such as sporting events or excursions, catch up on missed work. Students should work with their teacher to achieve this.
- Students undertaking VCE subjects are expected to attend 90% of scheduled classes to ensure they meet VCAA's requirements.

#### Whole school strategies to promote and maintain student attendance:

- Attendance expectations are promoted to parents, students and the community through our newsletter, Home Group time, year level assemblies, and parent meetings and on our website.

### ABSENCES:

In the event of a student absence, the parent / carer is required to make contact with the college office via phone call, face to face visit or by sending a note to approve the absence. If the absence is going to be lengthy parents are asked to notify either the Principal or the child's teacher, so that a Student Absence Learning Plan can be developed.

### **LATE TO SCHOOL:**

On arrival at school late (after the bell for the start of class), students should go straight to the office and request a late pass.

- The “It’s Not Okay to Be Away” program will be promoted and used to assist in improving attendance data.
- The school will provide the opportunity for greater parent involvement in the school.
- Through Home Group time and class time attendance will be monitored and recorded for all students by using electronic or paper roll marking.
- Home Group Coordinators will follow up on absent students and those who demonstrate patterns of absence or lateness.
- The school, with sponsorship from Bendigo Bank, will provide a Breakfast club for students each morning to assist with student health and connectedness.
- Through Home Group meetings, the Leadership Team regularly analyse attendance data and discuss attendance and strategies to improve student attendance rates.
- Home group and Class Teachers will contact parents/carers regularly to discuss student progress and engagement.
- Student Support Group Meetings (SSGM) may be convened at the discretion of the Principal to support students that are deemed to be at risk due to poor attendance.
- Returns to School Plans may be used to support students that have extended periods of absence.
- The Principal or his nominee can make home visits as required.

### **Recording Attendance on eCases:**

All students will have their attendance recorded by their Home Group and class teachers at the beginning of each day and checked after lunch either electronically or by paper. In the event of lack of access to eCases, the teacher is expected to provide a written list of absent students to the office by 10am. A summary of daily student absences will be published on the staffroom noticeboard as soon as possible in the morning for staff to check.

Appropriate coding of an absence will be used in CASES21 i.e 201 for illness (notified by a parent), 804 for a family holiday.

If a student is absent and the classroom teacher or general office has not been previously notified, then the absence will be marked in CASES21 as 806 – parent choice, unauthorised.

If the school has received notification and is considered a legitimate reason for absence, it will be entered as 807 – parent choice, school approved.

## Approving Absences

Common reason for absence	CASES21 Absence Code	Parent approval required	School required to confirm reason is authentic	Reasonable excuse for parent	General advice for principals	Follow up required
Illness or accident	201 or 202	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	No
Medical / Dental Appointment	205 or 209	Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if appointment cannot be scheduled outside school hours	No, unless absences become excessive
Attending or observing a religious event or obligation	805	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	No
Suspended	400 or 401	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes (suspension guidelines)
Bereavement such as a death of a family member, attendance at a funeral and/or related mourning activities (Sorry business)	211 or 805	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve	Offer and provide support as required
Truancy	300	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	Meetings, Attendance Improvement Plan
Family Holiday	804	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve if parents notify in advance. School policy should be developed for long or frequent/repeated holidays	Student Absence Learning Plans developed in conjunction with classroom teacher
Required to comply with another law		Yes	No	Yes	N/A	No, unless absences become excessive. Offer and provide support as required
Cultural observance	805	Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Approve if parent notifies in advance	No
Leisure (shopping, visiting relatives)		Yes	Yes	Requires principal to approve	Do not approve	No
Unforeseen event	807	Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if satisfied that event was unforeseen and prevented attendance	No
Unavoidable cause		Yes	Yes	Yes	Approve if satisfied	No
Exemption	802	No	No	Yes	N/A	Ensure any

						conditions of exemption are met. Monitor attendance at other provider
Employment in the Entertainment Industry		Yes	Yes (through approving exemption)	Yes	N/A	Yes, to ensure conditions of exemption are complied with

### **Student Attendance at School Approved Excursions:**

Attendance at School Approved Excursions will not be included as an absence from class. VCAA passes the responsibility for the implementation of attendance onto schools, and supports schools in their Attendance Policies. Therefore School Approved Excursions are not counted as absences from class.

- As per the camps and excursions policy, a list of all students taking part and the duration of the camp or excursion will be given to the COG in advance.
- COG will discuss and confirm eligibility of participation in the excursion with the student and parents/carers where required. This includes sporting excursions.

### **Attendance Follow Up:**

- Regular contact between Home Group teachers, class teachers, and parents/carers is strongly encouraged via student diaries and phone calls.
- If, within 3 days of the initial absence, parents/carers fail to provide an explanation for the absence, then contact from the Home Group or class teacher will be initiated, along with support provided to encourage the student to reconnect with the school.
- Where ongoing absence is an issue, a Student Support Group meeting (SSGM) with a focus on engagement and attendance may be convened to support improved attendance. This meeting will include the Home Group or class teacher, parent and student.

### **3. References**

***Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines***

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/engagement/default.htm>

### **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 November 2013

Signed:



Celia Wallace, School Council President