

Attendance Policy

Policy No. 16

Approved by School Board
July 2020



Scope

These procedures are in place for all students at Kerang Christian College.

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Kerang Christian College take seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

Rationale

Statutory expectations require that schools record attendance at least twice per day. In addition, teachers are required to have a record of student attendance for the classes that they teach.

There may be various reasons for poor attendance – including student health and well-being, family disruption, extended family holidays, school refusal, or poor motivation on behalf of the student. Most concerns about the rate of attendance will require a pastoral focus.

Generally speaking, school attendance is compulsory in Victoria. However, there are specific attendance expectations for VCE students, which need to be monitored and managed carefully.

Specific Attendance Requirements

VCE Students.

The VCE Guidelines (published by VCAA) expressly invite schools to set their own attendance requirements for the VCE.

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-faqs/Pages/current-students.aspx>

10.1 VCE attendance (Checked 17/7/2020)

All VCE units involve at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete work. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work but there has been a substantial breach of the school's attendance policy, and the school therefore wishes to assign an N result for the unit, the school must assign an N for one or more outcomes.

At Kerang Christian College we communicate the following expectations in our "VCE Student Handbook" (a document which is given to all VCE students):

“(Section) 4.3. VCE Attendance Policy ... Students are expected to attend all time-tabled classes, excursions, School and Year Level Assemblies, including Chapel services, and be punctual at all times. The College policy is a minimum class attendance of 90% (unless acceptable explanations are provided) for each unit of study during a semester”.

VCE Staff and Students should be familiar with Section 4.3 of the VCE Student Handbook.

VCE staff are required to keep a roll for every VCE class. (See VCE Staff Handbook)

Implementation

- Class Rolls are managed on the School Management System.
- The classroom teacher will mark the attendance roll in the morning home group class and at the commencement of Period 6 (Primary).
- The classroom teacher will mark the attendance roll in all classes (Secondary)
- Reasons for absences may be offered verbally by phone or personally to the school office on the day the child is away.
- Parents are required to notify the school before 9:30am.
- Students that are late to school should attend the school office for a late pass.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of co-operation regarding student attendance will be dealt with by the Principal or their delegate, either via a meeting or letter to the parents.
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Human Services.
- Student absences are recorded on student's twice-yearly reports.
- Students leaving the school early should report to the school office. Primary students should be signed out by a Parent/Guardian. Secondary students may sign themselves out if a note or phone call is provided by a Parent/Guardian.

Acceptable reasons for student absences are:

- Sickness
- Danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease
- Temporary or permanent infirmity
- Unavoidable and sufficient cause, e.g. - bereavement within the family or of a close friend; or - family trauma
- Attending a school-organised activity, e.g. excursion, camp, work experience, Cultural event

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absences are:

- Truancy
- Shopping expeditions with or without caregiver
- Haircuts
- Helping at home or at parent / caregivers place of work
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to and from such work)
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours (including driving lessons / tests)
- Excessive time for appointments which are avoidable

- Holidays

Parent / Caregivers Responsibilities Regarding Student Absences

It is the Parent/Caregivers responsibility to ensure that their children are enrolled in and attend a school every day, unless there are acceptable reasons for absence. Parent/Caregivers are asked to notify the school of any absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence.

Short-term absences - 1 or 2 days

Parents are asked to notify the College in writing, verbally by phone or personally to the school office on the day the child is away.

Long-term absences - 3 or more days

Parent/caregivers are asked to contact the school before the absence, if possible, or on the third day at the latest to explain the absence. In addition, a written note, stating the reason for the absence needs to be provided on the day of return to school.

Very long-term absences

Parent/caregivers are asked to discuss with the Principal and/or Head of School the implications of long-term absences from the school, before firm plans are made. When students are unavoidably absent for a long period of time, where possible the school will provide details of work for students to go on with, if requested to do so.

Please note that the College and parents/guardians need to be familiar with the attendance requirements as detailed in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Examples of acceptable reasons for lateness are:

- Accident on way to school
- Transport breakdown on way to school
- Transport or College bus late
- Other unavoidable and sufficient reasons

Examples of unacceptable reasons for lateness are:

- Truancy
- Sleeping in
- Just late (no reason given)
- Haircut
- Shopping
- Appointments which could have been made out of school hours (including driving lesson/test)
- Other avoidable and insufficient reasons

College Action for Unacceptable Reasons

- Referral to the Head of School.
- Referral to Head of School/ Principal for subsequent offence for more serious consequences.

NOTE: Lateness on compassionate grounds, e.g. family trauma, will be followed up by the Pastoral Care Team for the sake of the welfare of students. In these cases, consequence will not be given.

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Evaluation

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

Related Documents

- VCE Student Handbook
- VCE Staff Handbook
- VCAA. *VCE & VCAL Administrative Handbook, 2020.*
<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/handbook/2020/VCEVCALAdminHandbook052020.pdf>

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