

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## **RATIONALE:**

Wallan Secondary College encourages students to achieve to the best of their abilities and we set high expectations for all of our students. It is expected that all students take full advantage of their educational opportunities, including regular attendance, completion of all set work and consistently working to their full potential.

Students of compulsory school age (5 - 17 years) residing 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 shared enrolment with a specialist setting, have received an exemption from the Regional Director or are enrolled in correspondence education.

At Wallan Secondary College we believe that student success is determined by good attendance at school. Students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from their school.

## **PURPOSE:**

- maximise the attendance of all students
- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Wallan Secondary College has in place to
  - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
  - record, monitor and follow up student absences.
- Identify and support all students at risk of non-attendance
- Support families in achieving regular attendance for their children.
- Provide a documented process which supports the early detection and identification of causes of student non-attendance
- Ensure the efficiency and accuracy of data collection for school, legal and audit requirements.

## **EXPECTATIONS:**

Attendance depends on active cooperation between the school, parent/carers and the student. Whilst the primary responsibility for meeting the legal requirement for student attendance rests with the parent/carer, the College has the responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

Within the College the Principal has the overall responsibility for student attendance, and certain staff have particular designated duties in monitoring student welfare and attendance. As student attendance is fundamental to the role of teachers, all staff need to be actively and cooperatively involved.

## **Implication of poor attendance**

- Students in Years 7 - 10 who have more than 10 days unapproved absence per semester may be unable to satisfy the requirements of the subjects unless the Year Level Coordinator makes a special recommendation to the Principal

- Students in Years 11 - 12 (VCE, VET & VCAL) are required to maintain a 90% attendance rate for each unit of study they undertake. Failure to do this will result in the recording of an N for that Unit (unless there is a valid and approved reason for non-attendance)
- **Once attendance drops below 90% for a semester, senior students (VCE, VET & VCAL) will be unable to satisfy the requirements of the subjects/courses even if the absences are generally approved. They will therefore receive an 'N'.**

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- Attendance data will be reviewed by Student Management Team each week and presented to students at Year Level Assembly, by their Year Level Coordinator
- A school wide attendance protocol will be developed and reviewed annually to follow up student absences
- The College will maintain an accurate online attendance system
- Parents/Guardians are required to be accountable for their student's attendance. Student will also be accountable for their attendance

### **Students**

All Wallan Secondary College we expect enrolled students to:

- Be punctual and attend during normal school hours every day of each term
- Provide a medical certificate/written note to Student Service Officer on the first day of return to school
- Sign in at Student Services and provide explanation if late for school
- Discuss with each teacher procedures for catching up on any work missed through lateness or absence
- Senior Students in VCE, who are absent or will be absent for School Assessed Coursework (SAC) must notify the Year Level Leader prior to the scheduled SAC. They will need to complete an 'Application for SAC Extension' and provide a doctors certificate to verify the absence.

### **Parents/Guardians**

All Wallan Secondary College we expect parents/guardians to:

- Ensure that the student attends and is punctual each school day
- Notify the school (preferably in advance) if a student is to be absent
- Provide written explanation to the school for each student absence
- Contact the College through the Year Level Leader for assistance if a student is resistant to attending school.

### **Approved Absences include:**

- Absences covered by a medical certificate
- A student being sent home sick from school
- Attendance appointment with doctors dentists and allied health practitioners- with certificate
- Approved College excursion or sporting event
- Approved other educational activities or appointments/activities for student to pursue their chosen and approved pathway
- Suspension - internal or external

### **Unapproved Absences include, but are not limited to**

- Attending events and activity which do not align with school curriculum or student pathways
- Attending family holidays during the school Term (including extended weekend)
- Attending driving lessons and driving tests
- Not attending school due to poor or extreme weather, unless advised by the DET

Note: These may be recorded as parent choice, but are not school approved

## ATTENDANCE PROTOCOLS:

### Attendance Records

- In the morning Ready to Learn Teachers will mark student present or absent at the beginning of the school day - before 9:15
- A text message will be sent home by 10:00 am to inform parents of a student absence, we encourage parents/ careers to make contact with their student
- Teachers are to maintain accurate attendance records for each session of instruction. All rolls should be marked by the teacher in the first 10 minutes of each session
- Daily attendance records will be updated by 3:30 each day
- Class attendance data will be available on Compass for staff, students and parents to monitor
- Students must have a valid reason for not attending the school day or any of their timetabled classes (these are outlined under Approved Absences)

### Reporting Absences

- When parents/guardians know their son or daughter will be absent from school, they should ring or text providing the following information:
  - Identify themselves as the parent/guardian of the student
  - Advise the name and Year Level of the student
  - Advise the reason for the absence and the expected length of the absence. (A follow-up note or certificate may be required.)
- Wallan Secondary College has a 24-hour absence line with an answering machine, Ph 5783 0300 - choose option 1 and record a message. Alternatively please send a text message to 0416 906 927

### Monitoring Attendance

- Students who leave the College for an approved appointment or activity must notify the staff at Student Services and sign out, an parent/careers or guardian must be present on signing a student out (or an adults acting in this role). If the student returns to the College, they must sign back in
- Teachers are to monitor attendance and advise Year Level Coordinators of concerns. Further information regarding the response of the College to student absence can be seen in *appendix 1*.

Wallan Secondary College is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside school hours. Staff have responsibility for building and maintaining a child safe environment. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to all concerns with regard to the safety of any student of our College.

Date of next review: Feb 2023

This policy was ratified by the Wallan Secondary College Council on	18/02/2020
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**Wallan Secondary College**  
**Staff response to student absence**

**Attendance process**

1. One day absence - without a phone call, a text message to parents
2. Two days absence - without a phone call, sub school administrator to send a further text message
3. Three days absence - without a phone call, Ready to Learn teacher to ring Primary and Secondary caregiver if required
4. Four days absence - absence to be referred to co-ordinator to follow up.
5. Beyond 4 Days, and recurring absences in a weekly cycle, further follow up will include; letter to be sent home asking for explanation of absence, student support groups meeting, daily phone calls, home visit, use of SSSO - School Student Support Officer to assist with making family contact

Note: All communications and notes/information received will be recorded on the Compass system.

**Students with less than 90% attendance**

1. This data is to be gathered weekly and tracked by the sub school administrator
2. Each week sub school administrator in consultation with the Year Level Leader should attempt phone contact with families of students who have less than 70% attendance, and where no reasonable explanation has been provided.
3. Each Monday Year Level Leader should make contact with family of students who have less than 90% but greater than 70% attendance.

**NO unexplained absences**

1. When a student has been away for more than two days and a note explaining the absence has not been received the Ready to Learn Teacher must talk to the student about this absence and the impact that it has on learning and outcomes. Record conversation on Compass.
2. When a student is absent for more than 3 days and no parent explanation has been provided a phone call or written communication home, asking for an explanation.
3. If no explanation is provided absence should be recorded as **unapproved/parent choice**
4. **All explanations for absence must be recorded. No student should have an unexplained absence on their record.**

Each month Sub School Admin and Student Services will run a report - any unexplained absence must be accounted for. Sub school administrators to work with Leading Teachers and Principal class to ensure accurate recording of absence