



STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

RATIONALE

As a Catholic school in the Mercy tradition, we have a legal and moral obligation to ensure all students are supported in their education. This is in line with the College Vision Statement, Strategy 2020 (02/04) and the Mercy Education Value of *Respect*.

In Victoria, education is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 17. Regular and punctual daily attendance is a protective factor that assists students to achieve their personal, social and academic potential. It is the professional, pastoral and legal responsibility of schools to monitor student attendance. Regular school attendance fosters student learning and healthy self-esteem, develops social skills, teamwork and communication skills.

BACKGROUND

This policy is informed by the Department of Education and Training School Attendance Guidelines, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) attendance requirements and Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Attendance Policy. All registered schools must ensure their student attendance recording system:

- meets all legislative requirements
- discharges the school's duty of care for all students
- assists calculation of the school's funding
- enables school councils to annually report on student attendance
- meets VCAA attendance requirements for VCE students.

POLICY STATEMENT

Sacred Heart College expects every student's family to maximise her punctuality and attendance at school. All parties to this Policy are to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

Each student is responsible for:

- attending all timetabled classes punctually. This includes LivingMercy, homeroom, House meetings, whole school events and year level events, personal project meetings and assemblies
- showing an explanatory note or a medical certificate to Student Reception the day after an absence has occurred, unless parents have notified the College of the absence in advance by SMS, email or telephone call
- advising their homeroom and subject teachers in advance of any known absence (e.g. medical treatment, sporting or other excursions)
- reporting to Student Reception when arriving at school after morning homeroom has concluded. An email, SMS, phone call or note from the student's parent or carer is required to explain late arrival.
- providing a countersigned parent/carers note to Student Reception if no other means of contacting Reception has been used to report early departure for any reason. Countersigning is by Homeroom Teacher, Year Level Coordinator or Director of Students
- negotiating with their subject teachers using the Absence from Class form in advance of an extended absence due to in-term holidays
- ensuring the minimum 80% attendance requirement for each VCE/VET/VCAL subject is attained.

NB: Assessment tasks missed due to an approved absence (an absence accompanied by a medical certificate, death notice) will be completed during the next contingency class or at a time deemed appropriate by the VCE Coordinator.

Parents/Carers

As the primary educators of students, parents/carers must:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure the student attends school each day
- avoid making any non-essential appointments during the school day
- inform the College of a student's absence prior to or at 9.00am on the day of the absence. NB: If the College is not notified by 9.00am Student Reception will inform the parent/carer via SMS as soon as practical on the day of the absence. The parent/carer should reply to the SMS and provide a note for the Homeroom Teacher on the student's return to school
- provide the College with a medical certificate/documentation confirming an illness that is causing extended absence from school
- communicate with the Homeroom Teacher or Year Level Coordinator if, for any reason, the student is reluctant to attend school
- avoid arranging family holidays during the school term
 - NB: Where unavoidable, and the absence is for 5 days or more, notification of the absence must be given at least 2 weeks prior via an online form found on the Parent Portal. Students will be provided with an Absence from Class Form to be completed in negotiation with their subject teachers.

Teachers and Mentors

Teachers and Mentors are responsible for:

- recording student attendance and punctuality on Synergetic at Homeroom and the commencement of each lesson
- ensuring all notes brought by the student to explain a previous absence are delivered to Student Reception for recording
- recording the date(s) and reason of a student's proposed future absence or advising Reception staff to do so
- communicating with parents/carers about unexplained, ongoing or excessive absences.

Year Level Coordinators

Each Year Level Coordinator has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and smooth operation of their year level. The Year Level Coordinator will:

- monitor student absences and counsel students with ongoing attendance concerns
- apply a consequence in accordance with this Policy to any student found to have deliberately missed a class without a valid reason
- liaise with parents/carers of students with ongoing attendance issues
- inform the Director of Students of any ongoing attendance issues within their Year Level and document these in the Pastoral Care files on Synergetic.

The VCE, VCAL, and VET Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator of students in VCE, VCAL and VET will:

- communicate with parents/carers when any student is at risk of not satisfying the requirements of a unit due to absence
- ensure all students enrolled in classes at the College, including external students, are aware of and adhere to the Attendance Policy and 80% attendance requirement.

The Director of Students

The Director of Students will:

- work in collaboration with Year Level Co-ordinators to respond to chronic absenteeism or school refusal issues
- determine the cause(s) of absenteeism or school refusal, and to develop strategies to expedite the student's return to school.

Student Reception

The staff of Student Reception will:

- send an SMS message to parents/carers who fail to notify the College of their student's absence before by 9.00am as soon as practical on the day of the absence
- record any reasons for absences, late arrivals or early departures on Synergetic.

ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES/RELATED DOCUMENTS

Victorian Education Reform Act 2006

Department of Education and Training School Attendance Guidelines

VCAA Attendance Requirements

CECV Attendance Policy

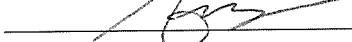
SHC Return to School Policy

SHC Planned Absence Forms

SHC Work Submission Policy

Date Approved: 17 MAY 2018

Name: ANNA NEGRO

Signature: 

Date presented at Council Meeting: 17 May 2018

Sponsor: Deputy Principal - Learning and Teaching

Person Responsible for Implementation: Deputy Principal - Learning and Teaching

Last Amended: 20 AUGUST 2015

Next Review Date: 2021

Location Checklist: Staff Handbook Students Parent Portal Website

