
Policy: Attendance

School: Benalla P-12 College

Section: Students 3.13

Version: One

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Agreed Understanding

1. There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement. Being absent from school makes it hard for students to catch up on missed work and affects student connectedness and improvement.
2. Poor and irregular attendance makes it difficult for students to form positive relationships with their peers and teachers. High attendance at school is an essential precursor to high attendance in the workplace. At Benalla P-12 College student attendance is promoted through clear statements of high expectations and procedures. All staff members need to take responsibility for high and improved student attendance. Parents and carers play an essential role in encouraging and emphasising the importance of school attendance.

Guidelines

1. The Benalla P-12 College Attendance policy must be well publicised within the school and the wider school community.
2. The policy must adhere to DET guidelines as per the 2014 guidelines.
3. The Education and Training Reform Act (2006), Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 and Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013 supports schools and School Attendance Officers to meet their responsibilities and duties describes what is considered to be a reasonable excuse for a student not attending school.
4. The policy is closely linked to the Benalla P-12 College Positive Behaviour and Well Being Policy and the Student Engagement Policy.
5. Benalla P-12 College will endeavour to provide early identification of and supportive intervention for, students at risk of irregular or non-attendance.
6. If a student's attendance falls below 90% (approved or unapproved) their academic progress is considered to be at risk.
7. Students are supported to improve their attendance and are given the opportunity to redeem poor attendance through catch up classes. These times are noted down and recorded in the office.

VCE/VCAL attendance

1. All VCE units require 50 hours of class time. A student needs to attend sufficient class time to complete the work.
2. At Benalla P-12 College the minimum attendance percentage is **80% (56.4 hours)**. If a student has completed the work but there has been a substantial breach of the attendance rules, and the school wishes to assign an "N" to the unit, the school must assign an "N" for one or more outcomes and thus the unit.
3. When considering this decision the VCE team will consider the disruption to the learning program that is a result of school activities. (Ref: VCE/VCAL Administrative Handbook, 2015)

Implementation

1. Students will be recognised and praised for good attendance in the classroom and larger forums eg certificates are awarded at assemblies each term
2. Regular reference is made to high expectations of attendance in both written and verbal forms

- ego school newsletters and student forums
3. Regular reference to student attendance is made in staff meetings and in the staff performance and development review process.
 4. Individual Student Learning Plans will include attendance and punctuality goals.
 5. Benalla P-12 College will provide out-of-school programs that will promote attendance and punctuality eg. breakfast club and study groups.
 6. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school prior to an expected absence by written note or by phoning the 'absence hotline'
 7. Students who are taking a period of extended absence from school must have a 'Student Absence Learning Plan' to support their education during this time.
 8. Up- to-date attendance reports are included in mid year and end of year reporting cycles and available to staff or parents/carers at any time.
 9. Electronic rolls are taken by teachers and the school notifies parents and guardians by an SMS on their mobile phones if students are absent or late to school without reason. This is done twice daily on secondary campus's.
 10. Attendance summaries are sent to Mentor/Classroom teachers on a weekly basis and it is their responsibility to contact home and immediately follow up on unapproved absences.
 11. Irregular and chronic absence will be followed up by Sub school leaders and welfare staff using a variety of different strategies and appropriate agencies. Contact with parents/carers will be made to arrange a Student Support Group Meeting (SSGM).
 12. When calculating attendance percentage, the only exceptions to this percentage are school-based apprenticeships, work placement, work experience, school excursions, school representation (eg sport, leadership), family bereavement and illness with a medical certificate.
 13. When considering this decision the teachers will consider the disruption to the learning program that is a result of school activities.
 14. Catch up classes are made available to students out of school hours to give them the opportunity to catch up on work they have missed due to absence. These time are noted down and recorded in the office.
 15. Senior students who are absent for school assessed classwork (SACs or SATs) must provide a medical certificate.

Basis for discretion:

The basis for discretion lies with the Principal as an operational matter.

Date ratified by Benalla P-12 College Council: 28 March, 2016

Recommended date for review: **March, 2018**

Date Implemented:	March, 2013
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