



Student Attendance



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Lyndale Secondary College

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to

- 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 Example School has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.
- maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and with unnecessary absences
- ensure regular lateness is minimized as the cumulative effect can have an impact on students learning
- minimize absences as this often means students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult
- reduce absenteeism as it contributes significantly to a lack of academic success
- ensure all reenrolled students are attending school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.

Scope

This policy applies to all students at Lyndale Secondary College

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of Lyndale Secondary College, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

Definition

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

Policy

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Lyndale Secondary College during normal school hours every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Example School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Lyndale Secondary College for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Lyndale Secondary College believes all students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Our school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Lyndale Secondary College parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Lyndale Secondary College about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Parents of students who are to be absent are required to telephone the relevant sub-school office before 8.30am to report the absence or register the absence on Compass.

Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged to approach a Year Level Coordinator to teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Students found to have head lice are not permitted to attend school until treatment has commenced. Signed notification of this (to be detached from the letter notifying the infestation) must be submitted to the First Aid Officer on return to school.

Students who have infectious disease will need to accept by the Department of Health Infectious Disease Guidelines and their doctors advice and remain absent from school for the recommended duration.

Supporting and promoting attendance

Lyndale Secondary College's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance. Our school also promotes student attendance by:

- Weekly Attendance rewards in Home Group
- Semester Attendance rewards activities
- Semester Attendance awards
- Breakfast club
- The College's assembly program will be used to develop and promote a culture of attendance by introducing whole school/ year level protocols for prevention and early intervention measures.

Recording attendance

Lyndale Secondary College must record attendance in every class. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Lyndale Secondary College's duty of care for all students
- meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority requirements for VCE students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at the start of each lesson/period] using compass and CASES21/eCASES. If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Lyndale Secondary College of absences by:

- a note from the parent/guardian which explains the reason for the absence on the day a student returns to the college if the school hasn't been contacted by phone or on Compass. The note should be dated and signed and include the student's name and form group. It should be handed in at the sub-school office.
- a medical certificate or other supportive medical evidence which must be submitted to the sub-school office on the day the student returns to school.

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Lyndale Secondary College will notify parents by SMS/push notification message email/telephone/other method of notification. Lyndale Secondary College will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Lyndale Secondary College will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Lyndale Secondary College considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused absence**'.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student, including a student required to attend Sorry Business
- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance

If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

Note - Many students receiving forms of government financial assistance need to be aware that all unexplained absences must be forwarded to Centrelink for auditing purposes. This may result in the withdrawal of payment or repayment of monies received by students.

The college will apply minimum student attendance criteria to the assessment of whether students have satisfactorily completed a unit of study. All students must attend 100% of classes, except for approved absences for school events such as sport and excursions, as well as genuine illness and bereavement

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, Lyndale Secondary College will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Education Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff.

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Permission to leave the College during the school day

- A student who needs to leave the College grounds between 8.40am and 3.00pm should obtain parent permission either through a parent note to the sub-school office or parents registering the request on Compass or making phone contact.
- The student will be issued with a pass, which is to be presented at the sub-school office before leaving the college. Students must not leave the college before signing out.
- Students may not leave the grounds at any time except when they:
 - are accompanied by teachers on an excursion, inter-school sport visit etc.
 - have been issued with a leave pass and have been signed out at the appropriate sub-school office.
 - Students who attend excursions must attend for the duration of the excursion
 - Students who have a study period may leave for the day if they have not other scheduled classes or activities. If students have a study period during period 1, they may arrive for the start of their next period.

Year 7 -10 Attendance Requirements

Any Common Assessment Task (CAT) missed due to extended absence will be marked as NA (Not Assessed) and may affect the students' ability to pass the subject. In order to pass the subject, a student must be able to show the teacher their understanding of the required skills and knowledge as demonstrated on class work from that unit and/or work completed as part of an absences Learning Plan.

Principals may consider the excuse given for an absence and use their discretion to decide if the parent/carer has a reasonable excuse for not meeting their legal obligations or does not have a reasonable excuse.

The college does not support the scheduling of absences during the school days and /or school term, including routines medical and dental appointments and family holidays, where these may be arranged for holiday periods.

The process for making a decision about student absences involves a Principal or their nominee

Year 11 and 12 Attendance

Success in Senior School starts with attending each day. Attendance in class ensures that our students have access to instruction and set work to keep up to date with their studies. While the college understand that some absences are unavoidable due to health, medical, legal or family reasons, students in Years 11 and 12 are required to attend 1000% if scheduled classes to satisfactorily complete a unit of study.

An approved absence may be:

- An illness which required medical treatment and for which there is a valid medical certificate
- An approved college excursion or sporting event or
- A serious problem which the Senior Sub School leader has been notified, and which can be shown to have resulted in the student suffering significant hardship

Medical Certificates:

- If you are absent from school, you must submit a valid certificate from a doctor to the Senior Studies Centre
- IF you are absent from school on the day of a SAC you must produce a valid medical certificate from a doctor for the absence to be approved
- The Medical Certificate must be dates for the day of the absent and cannot be back dated

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Lyndale Secondary College decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer in the Southern Easter Region for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the Principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:
 - the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences; and
 - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful
- the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
 - the student has been absent for 10 consecutive school days; or
 - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

More information and resources

- The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Attendance](#)

Related Policies and Codes

Student Code of Conduct

Parent Code of Conduct

Student Behaviour

Decision Making Responsibilities for Students (Court Orders/Parenting Plan)

Student Engagement and Inclusion

Head Lice

Excursion Policy

Infectious Disease Guidelines

Policy review and approval

Policy last reviewed	Term 1 2023
Consultation	Strategic Intent Team Student Engagement Team School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Term 1 2026

Signatures	
Pam Robinson Principal	Imran Maniar School Council President