



2019 CRAIGIEBURN SECONDARY COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE PROCESS SUMMARY

Education is a continuous process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult. To reach their potential at school, students need to attend regularly. Educational research has repeatedly shown a strong relationship between success and attendance at school. In accordance with the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**, schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6-17 years unless an exemption has been granted.

According to the **Department of Education and Training (DET)** student must attend 100% of school days and will be exempt only under reasonable and valid grounds. For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/guardian must promptly provide an explanation on each occasion to the school. The school will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**. Absences that the school does not determine to be reasonable will be known as **Explained Unapproved Absences**.

Craigieburn Secondary College has developed processes that work to support each family to assist their child to achieve, where possible, 100% attendance. The following summary provides an outline of what is known as:

1. **Explained Approved Absences**
2. **Explained Unapproved Absences**
3. **Unexplained Absences**

The College wishes to ensure that all parents have a clear understanding of how they can meet their obligations under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**.

Explained Approved Absences

What is an approved explanation for an absence?

- Medical Certificate / Certification / Principal (delegate) approval
- Bereavement/funeral
- Dentist or other medical specialist appointments
- School excursions and Sport days
- Religious/cultural reasons are only considered as approved absences with Principal approval
- Family holiday is only considered approved if supported by completed absence learning plan and teacher permission forms completed and sighted by Year Level Coordinator (YLC).

All other absences not listed above are considered unapproved and do not meet the attendance legislation requirements.

What does this mean for families?

- Families are required to explain absences before or on the day of a student's absence
- If a child is absent without communication to the school, a follow up SMS will be sent on the day of absence. **Text messages** are sent daily at 10.00am and 3.00pm
- **Daily SMS** are sent home and an unexplained absence will initiate a **Pink Slip** given to the student for families to provide a valid reason for absence.

Families have 5 days in which to return the Pink Slip to explain the absence.

Regardless of the type of absence when a student's attendance rate reaches less than 90% the student is considered at risk. At this point the College will introduce interventions that will include a Student Engagement and Attendance Profile and/or a Student Support Group meeting with parent/guardian to develop an Individual Learning Plan and support from the College Allied Health Team.

Explained Unapproved Absences

What is an unapproved explanation for an absence?

In general, the school may record an absence as 'unapproved' when no reasonable explanation has been given for the student's absence. If a reason is given for the student absence and this reason is not approved by the Principal then the school will notify the parents/guardians in writing.

What does this mean for families?

- An explained unapproved absence is when the Principal does not approve the absence reason given by the parent or legal guardian. The College will notify the parent when the absence is not approved.
- Explained Absence - Approved or Unapproved or Amended – A Compass chronicle entry is generated and an automated email is sent to parent/guardians acknowledging that the absence has been recorded as Explained Approved or Unapproved or Amended; this absence is updated from Explained Unapproved to Explained Approved.
- **Level 1 Letter - Attendance at Risk 90%** - A letter is generated and an SMS and email is sent to parents/guardians notifying them that the student's overall attendance rate has reached less than 90%.
- **Level 2 Letter - Attendance at Risk 80%** - A letter is generated and an SMS and email is sent to parents/guardians notifying them that the student's overall attendance rate has reached less than 80%.
- **Level 3 Letter – Attendance at Risk 70%** - A letter is generated and an SMS and email is sent to parents/guardians notifying them that the student's overall attendance rate has reached less than 70%. This letter will include DET attendance information and supporting information from external service links. Where a student has 70% or less overall school attendance rate the College to report via referral form to the DET's School Attendance Officer (Regional Director).

Unexplained Absences

What is an unexplained absence?

An absence will be recorded as an '**Unexplained' absence**' if no explanation about the absence is given to the school by the parent/guardian.

If the parent/guardian do not contact the school to provide an explanation on the day of the student absence, the College will attempt to contact the parent/guardian and seek clarification within five days of the recorded absence.

If no contact can be made with the parent /guardian of the child within 10 days absence, the absence will be recorded as an '**Unexplained' absence**. A parent/guardian can contact the Principal at any time after the recorded absence to provide an explanation.

What does this mean for families?

- For each Unexplained Absence - **a Pink Slip is sent home**, via the student, requesting an explanation for the absence, and must be returned to the school.
- **Level 1 (2 days unexplained absences)** – Email, SMS and a letter will be sent home requesting the family provide a valid and reasonable explanation for the absences.
- **Level 2 (5 days unexplained absences)** – Email, SMS and a letter will be sent home requesting the family provide a valid and reasonable explanation for the absences. Where a student has 5 days of unexplained or unapproved absence the College is required to report via referral form to the DET's School Attendance Officer (Regional Director).
- **Level 3 (10 days of unexplained absences)** – Email will be sent home and a phone call will be made requesting the family to provide an explanation as to the absences and attend a Student Support Group (SSG) meeting. When no contact with the family can be made the Assistant Principal will call the emergency contact(s) to arrange an SSG meeting.
- **Level 4 (20 days unexplained absences)** – Email will be sent home and a phone call will be made to organise a Student Support Meeting (SSG).
- **Level 5 (25 days unexplained absences)** – Email will be sent home asking the family to organise a Student Support Meeting (SSG). Where a student has 25 days of unexplained or unapproved absence the College will submit a second referral form to the DET's School Attendance Officer (Regional Director)
- **Level 6 (referral to the Department of Education)** – a registered letter will be sent home signed by the Principal informing you that the College has sent a referral to the DET's School Attendance Officer.

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