



**PATTERSON RIVER
SECONDARY COLLEGE**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY
IT'S NOT O.K. TO BE AWAY**

Striving for Excellence



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Policy Background

The Education Act requires that children of school age (six to seventeen years) residing in Victoria are in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school, unless formally exempt. Patterson River Secondary College requires that post-compulsory aged students also attend school unless a valid reason exists.

Parents have a legal responsibility to satisfactorily explain all absences. If your child is going to be absent the College needs to be informed prior to the absence or on the day of return.

Purpose Statement

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences.

Guidelines

Students are required to attend at least 90% of all classes. Overall attendance will be monitored by the Year Level Coordinator and Sub School Administrative Assistant. Parents and students will be informed when a student's absence falls below 90% and are at risk of disengagement.

The 90% requirement does not include **approved absences**. However, a minimum attendance requirement is necessary to meet authentication rules. Students who are absent from school without a medical certificate or for prolonged periods of time are at risk of failing unit/s which may impact the successful completion of their VCE/VCAL and for years 7-10 may result in students and parents being required to justify their progression to the subsequent year level.

Student **absences** are **approved** by the Year Level Coordinator when documentation substantiates that the absence is due to:

- Illness
- Funeral
- Court appointments
- Personal welfare (as approved by Coordinators and Head of Sub School)

Or the student is engaged in the following College sanctioned activities:

- School representation
- School based New Apprenticeships and work placement
- VET course
- Camps / Excursions

Student absences must be supported by appropriate documentation such as:

- A medical certificate
- Parent/guardian letter or appropriate Compass notification
- Other documentation including, but not limited to:
 - Psychologist report/letter
 - A qualified medical practitioner's letter/report
 - A recognised counselling or support agency letter/report

The onus is on the student to obtain and submit medical certificates and other documentation to support absences to the Sub School Administration Assistant.

A signed and dated note from a parent/guardian explaining the absence must be brought to school upon the students return and handed in to the relevant Sub School Administration Assistant. The College will contact parents/guardians of students who are absent without explanation via Compass Alert.

Punctuality is essential. Students who arrive late to school must sign in at the General Office with appropriate documentation or parent approval. Ongoing instances of lateness will incur a community service.

Students who intend to leave school any time during the day must have a note from their parents/guardians and they must be signed out at the General Office by either a parent/guardian or a person who has been registered as an emergency contact by said parent/guardian.

The following explanations **are unacceptable** to excuse absences:

- Approval for planned approved absence had not been sought in advance or in accordance with school policy
- The student was absent due to participating in leisure, sport, paid employment or social activities without prior approval
- The parent has provided no explanation for the absences
- The student has no reason or parent approval for absences (e.g. wagging)

Key Responsibilities

Sub School Administration Assistant will:

- Monitor absences daily
- Send a compass alert out to the family of any student who is absent for two consecutive periods in the morning
- Provide Year Level Coordinators with a list of students who have regular absences and who are "at risk" of disengagement
- Call parents of students with "at risk" attendance levels first and then parents of other absentees
- Provide a report of student absences and patterns to the Year Level Coordinators to be discussed and actioned at the Sub-school Meeting
- Sub School Administration Assistant will document any issues that are impacting on attendance data (i.e. parent contacts, staff marking rolls, Compass glitches).

Year Level Coordinators will:

- Monitor attendance data and bring **reports to sub-school** meetings
- Examine patterns, trends and students who are falling **below 90% attendance**
- For any student falling below 90% attendance a letter will go home offering support, encouraging parent contact and informing them that the school may need to report the lack of attendance to DET. This will occur every five weeks
- For any student falling below 80% attendance contact will be made by Student Managers with parents requesting a meeting with student and parent. This will occur every five weeks
- For any student falling below 70% attendance at any point in the year immediate contact will be made by Year Level Coordinators and a meeting with them, the Sub School Leader and the Assistant Principal will be arranged
- If the reason for lack of attendance is a **wellbeing issue** then the Sub School Leader will discuss this at the wellbeing meeting and support/referrals will be made as necessary
- If the attendance issue is not resolved in a timely manner it must be referred to the Principal for further intervention. Actions could include parent meeting, home visit, Student Support Group, formal notification to Region and consideration to making them inactive on CASES

Links

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/attendance.aspx>

Review

To be reviewed November 2018

Version

Ratified College Council Meeting 19 February 2018

(PO Box 2664 Seaford Vic 3198)

Telephone: 03 8770 6700

Facsimile: 03 9786 9810

Email: patterson.river.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au

Internet: www.prsc.vic.edu.au

Principal: Mr Daniel Dew

