

School Attendance Policy



Source of Obligation

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 2 cl 10) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.8) require that we must make provision to:

- monitor the daily attendance of each student enrolled at the College;
- identify any absences of a student from College including classes;
- follow up any unexplained absences of a student from the College or classes;
- notify any parent or guardian regarding a student's unsatisfactory College or class attendance; and
- record information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at College or classes on their student file.

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 2 cl 11) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.9) require that we must maintain a student attendance register in which the attendance at the College of any child of compulsory school age is noted at least twice a day, and any reason given or apparent for the absence of the child from the College is noted.

Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd (DOSCEL) Policy

In accordance with the Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic.) (the Act) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.), school attendance is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted.

Whilst ensuring student attendance at school is a legal obligation of parents/guardians, supporting students to attend school each day is the shared responsibility of all parents, students, the school and the wider community.

School attendance is important as it maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks.

Purpose

To ensure active support for full student attendance and retention until the completion of Year 12 or its equivalent and respond to individual student circumstances when regular attendance is not consistent.

Schools within Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd (DOSCEL) maintain attendance records, identify and follow up unexplained absences and develop procedures to support and maintain student attendance.

Definitions

<i>Attendance</i>	A student is considered to be in attendance at school when onsite and/or involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the school (for example an excursion or camp). A student is also considered to be in attendance when the student is engaged in a re-engagement program or another school part time to make up full time attendance and the schools or settings have agreed the time fractions, allocation of Student Resource Package (or other funding) and the educational plan for the student.
<i>Parent/guardian</i>	Includes “a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibilities under the Family Law Act 1975 (Cwth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides”.
<i>School Attendance Officers</i>	In the context of attendance, School Attendance Officers are empowered through the Act to issue School Attendance Notices, School Enrolment Notices and Infringement Notices.
<i>School Attendance Support Team</i>	This team is comprised of the College’s relevant Wellbeing Team.

Responsibilities

<i>Parent/guardian</i>	<p>Parents/guardians must enrol a child of compulsory school age at a registered school and ensure the child attends at all times when the school is open for instruction, unless exemption from attendance has been granted.</p> <p>For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/guardian must promptly provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.</p>
<i>Students</i>	Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled during normal school hours every day of term, unless there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student, or the student is registered for home schooling and has partial enrolment.
<i>Principal</i>	<p>The Principal must ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily attendance of each student enrolled at the school is recorded at least twice a day in primary schools and for every class in secondary schools.• Any absences of a student from school including classes, are identified.• Reasons for each student’s absence are provided and recorded in writing.• Explanations for absences that are provided, are a reasonable excuse for the purposes of their responsibilities under the Act.• Follow up any unexplained absences of a student by contacting the parent/guardian of the student as soon as practicable on the same day.• Parents/guardians are notified promptly regarding a student’s unsatisfactory school or class attendance. If, upon being notified of their child’s absence or

contacted to seek an explanation, a parent reports that the child was not living with them on that day, the school should ensure they notify another parent who was responsible for ensuring the child attended school on the relevant day(s).

- If contact cannot be made with the parent, contact should be made with the emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school.
- Information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes is recorded on their student file.
- Parents/guardians are informed of their responsibilities around attendance and initiatives aimed at promoting parental awareness of the importance of children attending school every day are implemented.
- Attendance improvement strategies, interventions and levels of adjustment are implemented where the absence is having a significant impact on a student's educational achievement and development, including an Attendance Student Support Group, Personalised Learning Plan, Student Absence Learning Plan and Return to School Plan.
- Strategies for supporting attendance of students in out-of-home care, experiencing homelessness, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) families, overseas students, students with disabilities, students with cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and newly arrived families are implemented.
- DOSCEL is advised where a referral to a School Attendance Officers is required because the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months without reasonable excuse for absences.
- Referral processes are implemented to Child FIRST or Child Protections, DOSCEL and the School Attendance Officer where required **at least five full days** in the previous 12 months without reasonable excuse for absences.
- Referral processes are implemented to Child FIRST or Child Protection, DOSCEL and the School Attendance Officer where required.
- Ensure Schools within DOSCEL maintain attendance records, identify and follow up unexplained absences and develop procedures to support and maintain attendance in accordance with Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic.) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.).
- The Deputy Director Catholic Identity, Leadership, Learning and Teaching in conjunction with the school principal may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance or attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduced to less than full time.

Expected Outcomes

- Schools within DOSCEL actively support student attendance and retention.
- Schools within DOSCEL maintain attendance records, identify and follow up unexplained absences, and develop procedures to support and maintain attendance.

Lavalla Catholic College's Procedures

Daily Attendance Register

Lavalla Catholic College keeps a register of the daily attendance of all students at the College through SIMON student management software which is also stored within the College's SYNERGETIC database. The register of daily attendance records the following information for each student:

- daily attendance;
- absences;

- class passes for exemption from class for a limited period of time;
- reason for absence; and
- documentation to substantiate reason for absence.

Attendance is checked regularly throughout the day, as follows:

- during every period that a student has been assigned; and
- at the beginning and arranged interval times on excursions/activities.

Monitoring Daily Attendance

Lavalla Catholic College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and identify absences from College or class:

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that they notify the College to explain the absence of their children on any particular school day. Notification may be provided via email or by telephoning the College and should be made prior to the start of College.
- Class teachers take the class roll promptly at the commencement of Homeroom/LA as well as each assigned lesson.
- All absences are recorded absences using SIMON student management software which then cross checks against the absentee notifications that have been provided to the College that day.

Following Up Unexplained Student Absences

Lavalla Catholic College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to follow up unexplained absences from College:

- Where an absence has not been explained by 10am, an SMS Text message is forwarded to the student's parent/guardian notifying them of the absence and requesting that they immediately contact student services.
- If the parent/guardian does not respond by 11am, student services will make contact via telephone with any of the contacts listed.
- If no verbal verification has taken place with any contact, a voice message will be left with one of the contacts.
- Where the absence remains unexplained the matter will be reported to the head of house for investigation and follow up.
- All information in relation to unsatisfactory attendance is recorded on students' SIMON files and information with respect to attendance is provided in each student's school report via the school portal/SIMON PAM.

Notification of Parents & Guardians of Unsatisfactory Attendance

Lavalla Catholic College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to notify parents and guardians of unsatisfactory attendance:

- Where a student is unsatisfactorily absent from College, the College will contact the parents directly to seek an explanation and to remind parents of their child's obligation to attend school.
- Where parents repeatedly fail to inform the College of absences the head of house will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report absences.

Records of the Register of Daily Attendance The register is retained indefinitely and copies of information in the register are stored off-site at regular intervals. The register is kept for each Calendar year, and shows the attendance checks and any reasons for absence.

Lavalla Catholic College also uses the support tools and guidance provided by **Every Day Counts** to promote full time school attendance.

Implementation Lavalla Catholic College has set up a series of compliance tasks on our **Assurance System**, to ensure that key obligations under the Victorian Registration Standards and CECV Guidelines are managed effectively.