ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

- All schools in Victoria are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students, which address their educational needs.
- Research shows that regular attendance is integral to successful academic, employment, and social outcomes.
- Accordingly, it is important that students, staff, and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of regular student attendance.

Kurunjang Secondary College:

- States that students are required to achieve a **90%** attendance rate to satisfy course requirements.
- Is committed to promoting the key messages of the state-wide initiative **Every Day Counts**.
- Believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend every school day.
- Will monitor, communicate, and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- Believes that truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.
- Believes that attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the college community.

Responsibilities

**Parents/Carers:**

- Ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the program in which they are enrolled.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, that is, any time during which a student is not attending or participating in their educational program.
- Contact the Administration Office or Attendance Officer prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible, parents must provide the reason for any absences prior to **9.00 a.m.** on the day of absence, or within two (2) days of the student’s return to school. This should take the form of a medical certificate or a satisfactory written explanation for the absence.
- Contact the Attendance Officer and/or Head of School if student absence is to be for an extended period of time (e.g. family reasons or illness) and request schoolwork.
- Contact the Student Welfare Coordinator and/or Head of School if a student is refusing to attend school or issues arise that may affect their child’s attendance.
- Initiate or attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child’s attendance or participation in their educational program.
· Provide a written note (signed and dated) to the college Administration Office, if their child requires to leave school early. (Refer to the section of Leaving the School During the Day).
· Provide a written note (signed and dated) from parents/carers explaining any lateness.
· Advise the college Administration Office of any change of address or phone numbers to ensure college records are accurate. Up-to-date data is essential in an emergency.

**Students:**
· Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, students must attend school each day. They must be on time and have all necessary equipment.
· Never leave the college during school hours without obtaining appropriate approval. (Refer to the section of Leaving the School During the Day).
· Report to the Administration Office if arriving to school at or after 9:00 am and provide a note from parents/carers explaining their lateness.
· Ensure all missed schoolwork is completed.
· Regularly discuss attendance with Year Level Coordinator, Head of School, or Assistant Principal.
· Ensure the absence records given out in Home Group are accurate and report any inconsistencies to the Attendance Officer or Coordinator.

**College:**
· Regularly inform students, staff, and parents/carers about the Kurunjang Secondary College Attendance Policy and Procedures (including the Policy and Procedures for late arrival, early departure and truanting) and make this publicly available to parents/carers through the college’s website and newsletters.
· Monitor student attendance daily through marking the roll at the beginning of each day in Home Group and each lesson.
· The Attendance Officer will notify parents/carers of any unapproved absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child’s absence.
· The Attendance Officer will notify the Year Level Coordinator, Head of School, and Assistant Principal when concerned that the explanation for student absence is unsatisfactory.
· Coordinators, Heads of School, and /or Assistant Principals will discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents and students when school attendance has become a problem.
· Coordinators and Heads of School will arrange for teachers to provide students with schoolwork when they are absent for legitimate extended periods.
· Will acknowledge students with perfect attendance in assemblies, award certificates, and bestow other rewards as appropriate.
· Notify the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists.
Procedures

*Reporting and Monitoring Attendance*
At Kurunjang Secondary College, student absence, lateness, or truanting are taken seriously.

*Attendance*
- If students are absent from school at any time, parents/carers should advise the school before 9:00 am and provide a satisfactory explanation for the absence. They can do this by:
  - Phoning the Administration Office on **9743 9211** before 9:00 am
  - Writing a note (signed and dated) for their child to submit. This may be done in the Student Planner
- Students are required to be at school by **8.50 am** to ensure they go to Home Group in adequate time
- Student attendance is taken for the first time in Home Group and every lesson thereafter
- Students continually late to Home Group will be referred to the Year Level Coordinator
- Class rolls will be marked by staff at the beginning of each lesson. Teachers will only mark students as attending if students are physically present in the classroom. Any discrepancy in attendance will be referred to the Head of School and Attendance Officer

*Lateness*
- Students who arrive late to school at, or after **9:00 am** are required to report to the Administration Office, and obtain a Late Pass
  - It is expected that students who are late will provide a note (signed and dated) or phone call from their parents/carers explaining their lateness for a legitimate reason to avoid further consequences. The note may be in the Student Planner
- Students who arrive late on more than two (2) occasions in a semester, will be required to attend an after school detention. The maximum number for lateness is three (3) per semester for which an after school detention will be issued
  - If the lateness continues, the student will have an interview with the Head of school, and/or Assistant Principal, and their parents and may result in further consequences

*Leaving the college during the day*
- Students are not permitted to leave the college during school hours without providing a dated and signed letter of permission from parents/carers. Students will be permitted to leave the college for appointments to doctors, dentists or other urgent appointments. Appointment cards, doctor’s letters, or medical certificates will be required. This letter must be taken to the Administration Office prior to **9:00 am**.
  - A parent/carer must be present to collect the student
- Students are not permitted to leave school at recess and lunchtime for purposes other than those listed above
Truancy

- An Absence Report will be generated and provided to the Principal, Assistant Principals, and Heads of School on a regular basis by the Attendance Officer. Students found to be truanting will be disciplined under the college’s Values and Expected Behaviours for students.

Responses to Absences

Procedures for unapproved absences:

- Parents/carers with mobile phone numbers recorded in the college’s database will be notified each day of an unapproved absence via text message. Parents are required to respond to these text messages by contacting the college by phone. Parents/carers are asked to immediately contact the college if they believe their child is in attendance.
- When students are absent without explanation for three (3) days, a text message (SMS) will be sent reminding parents/carers of their obligations to ensure their child attends school on every school day, and the requirement for providing satisfactory explanations for all absences.
- Where there is a continuation of unapproved absences, or absences without satisfactory reasons, parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Head of School and/or Assistant Principal to address issues contributing to these absences and to discuss implementation of appropriate strategies and support mechanisms.
- Absences for which a satisfactory reason has been provided are considered approved absences, and the student’s enrolment is viewed as continuous.
- Undertaking a leisure activity such as shopping, visiting friends and relatives, birthdays, concerts or holidays, is not considered a satisfactory explanation for an absence and will be recorded as unapproved.
- An absence for which a satisfactory reason has not been provided will be considered an unapproved absence.
- All absences, unapproved and approved contribute to the overall attendance rate of a student, and should not exceed 10%. Note that students are required to achieve a 90% attendance rate to satisfy course requirements.
- Where unsatisfactory attendance continues (persistent lateness and absence), the Principal may commence processes associated with Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation.
- The Principal is able to seek advice from Central Office Legal & Administrative Law Branch regarding consent to prosecute parents/carers.
Reviews, Special Considerations and Exemptions

Exemptions to the Attendance Policy may be sought on the grounds of disability as defined be the DET Disability and Impairments Guidelines.

A student whose attendance falls below 90% may seek a review or special consideration if their promotion to the next year level is at risk. A detailed written request must be made to the College Principal outlining the reasons. Any certificates from Health Care Professionals supporting a claim must be attached to the written request. A Panel will convene to consider such requests.

DEFINITIONS

The College classifies three types of absence:

Type 1 Absence due to illness/family issue - approved

Approved absence due to illness/family issue will count as both a school absence and a class absence. Students may miss scheduled classes due to illness or a family issue that temporarily prevents them from attending school.

Absence due to illness/family issue can be verified by a note/telephone call from parent/carer or by a doctor’s certificate.

Type 2 Absence – unapproved

Unapproved absences will count as both a school absence and a class absence.

A student who misses a scheduled class without the permission of the college or parent/carer is considered truant.

A student may not leave the college premises at recess and/or lunch times. The college does not accept parental/carer permission to leave the college grounds at recess and/or lunchtime.

Unapproved absences that cannot be verified by any official means will lead to disciplinary action.

Type 3 Absence - due to College approved activity

Participation in college-approved activities will not count as a school absence or as a class absence as long as the official permission form and payment (where applicable) have been submitted prior to the event.

Students may miss scheduled classes due to participation in a variety of college-approved activities. A College-approved activity is defined as:

- Sport
- Music lessons/performance
- Work experience/work placement
- Camps and Excursions
- Student Leadership (SRC meetings, peer support)
- Community Service (student-of-the-day, yard duty, one-off special events)
- Suspension

(Year 12 students’ attendance to events is subject to approval by the Assistant Principal for Senior School)
Evaluation

This policy will also be reviewed as part of the college’s regular policy review process.

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<tr>
<th>Date Implemented</th>
<th>24th July, 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Aylin Gökmen, Assistant Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved By</td>
<td>College Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</td>
<td>Ms T Bradley, College Council President, 23rd July 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Reviewed</td>
<td>18th June, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible for Review</td>
<td>Aylin Gökmen, Assistant Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>June, 2017</td>
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<td>References</td>
<td>The school attendance guidelines:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Applies to all registered schools in Victoria (including non-government schools), parents of compulsory school-aged children, and School Attendance Officers</td>
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<td>• Supports schools and School Attendance Officers to meet their responsibilities and duties under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 and Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013.</td>
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