



HEATHFIELD  
HIGH SCHOOL

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

CREATED: 03/17  
LAST UPDATED: 12/22  
REVIEW DATE: 12/24

Students need to maximise attendance at school to gain optimum benefit from education. Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education programs. Non-attendance and irregular attendance can be viewed as early indicators of the potential for disengagement from the education program. Absence from school can limit a student's achievement of essential knowledge and skills required for effective participation in work, relationships and active citizenship.

### Rationale

The Department for Education) is accountable to the community, through the Minister for Education and Child Development, for ensuring appropriate attendance in government educational programs.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- Society has a responsibility to prepare young people for successful participation in learning and the broader community.
- Families, society, peers and educators and other significant adults influence the life choices of young people.
- Attendance has benefits and consequences that increase or decrease life choices
- Continuity of relationships and learning in an educational program is dependent upon attendance.
- Attendance is a shared responsibility between the staff of schools, parents/carers, children and students and members of the wider community.
- Attendance is critically linked to the quality of curriculum, teaching and learning and the development of relationships, which then foster improved learning outcomes and increased well-being for individuals and groups.

### Responsibilities of School Staff

Staff in school sites are responsible for supporting the agreed attendance improvement processes for the site and will:

- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all students and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance.
- Record attendance/absences according to requirements.
- Contribute to the analysis of attendance trends and the development and implementation of school Attendance Improvement Plans.
- Implement school procedures, including parent/carer notification to follow up non- attendance.
- Work with parents/carers and government agencies to support the learner's regular attendance in the education program.
- Refer all students, under compulsion, with unsatisfactory attendance to counsellors if the actions above have proved unsuccessful.
- Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate, document and store as per Department procedures.

## Responsibilities of the Parent or Caregiver

Any child between the ages of 6 – 17 is required by law to attend school. The Compulsory Education Age legislation, which was implemented from the beginning of 2009, requires all young people between 16 and 17 participate full time in an approved learning program, which is education or training delivered through a school, university or registered training organisation, an apprenticeship or traineeship, employment or a combination of these. The compulsory Education Age legislation does not change the school leaving age, which remains at 17.

Where a child fails to attend school as required by the Act, each parent/carer of the child shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a monetary penalty. Where a child's education program provides for off- site instruction it is a requirement that the child attend in line with the requirements of the education program. Prosecution for non-attendance by a child of compulsory age will be initiated only after all other intervention has been attempted and prosecution is considered to be in the best interest of the child.

The Act further provides for the Minister or a delegate to exempt any child conditionally, or unconditionally, from attendance. Such exemptions may provide for online learning, home schooling and other like programs. Exemptions are managed by the school principal.

If a student is going to be absent from school for any amount of time the parent/caregiver must inform the school at the earliest possible convenience the reason for the absence. If a child has been ill and has seen a doctor, a certificate from the doctor will assist in accounting for the absence.

## Responsibilities of the Student

Children and students enrolled in a school site have responsibility for their attendance. The level of responsibility will be determined by the individual circumstances of the child.

The expectations are that they:

- Attend school or other educational program as negotiated regularly on every day the program is offered.
- Be punctual in arriving at school or the other negotiated educational program.
- Sign in or out if arriving late or leaving early.
- Engage appropriately in the education program as negotiated.
- Provide the school with an explanation for the absence from their parent/caregiver.

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS APPENDIX 1 - SCHOOL PROCESS

