

# Attendance Policy

## Introduction

This Attendance Policy is designed to ensure the College is compliant with student attendance regulations as mandated by the government and ratified by Penola Catholic College.

It also provides effective, efficient and accurate protocols for the recording and monitoring of student attendance. This policy supports the College Values Statements, with particular reference to striving “to offer the best possible education for each student.”

## Principles

1. At Penola Catholic College we have a responsibility to maintain a high standard of education.
2. As education is a sequential process, student absence from scheduled classes can result in gaps in student learning which may impact on overall student development.
3. A responsible attitude to all scheduled school days is expected by students, teachers and parents.
4. Students are expected to attend all classes in order to undertake coursework and complete assessment tasks to maximise their opportunities for learning. Teachers observe students at work and are therefore able to authenticate any work done and set homework tasks to complement their learning.

## Definitions

1. The term “**absent**” means that the student was not present at the scheduled class/homeroom or compulsory school activity.
2. In some cases a student may incur a “**school-based absence**.” This would include events such as:
  - College excursions, College overseas trips or Sports activities (e.g. Premier League)
  - Preparation for College events such as Musicals, Liturgies, instrumental programs
  - Work Experience, School Based Apprenticeships, external VETS
  - Appointments with college staff (e.g., YLCs, HOC or Psychologists)

Although marked absent by the subject teachers for these activities, the student would have been given permission to miss the scheduled classes.

3. A “**non school-approved absence**” would occur when a student is absent from class without the permission of the College. Examples of non school-approved absences are:
  - Medical/dental appointments
  - Family or personal reasons
  - Holiday
  - Truancy
  - Driving lessons/Driving Test
  - Illness (without medical certificate)
4. **Approved absence** is when the College approves the absence as being a genuine reason for being absent. Examples of these are:

- Illness supported by a medical certificate
  - Bereavement
5. **Absentee Action Plan** is a prescriptive plan that determines the role of staff when an attendance issue is developing

## Related Legislation

Government policies that inform and mandate this Attendance Policy are:

- The Education Act 1958
- The Education and Training Reform Act 2006

## Monitoring Student Attendance – Procedure

1. Homegroup teachers will monitor the attendance of students during Homeroom each morning and record this electronically in Synergetic.
2. Records of attendance, absence, and reasons for absence are entered in the College's attendance record. Any unexplained absence is followed up by a telephone call or SMS to the parent / guardian by the school attendance officer every day.
3. Subject teachers will monitor the attendance of students in their classes and enter the data on the Synergetic system or MyPenola.
4. The Campus Office, Homegroup teachers and Year Level Co-ordinators will maintain records of attendance and follow up as necessary according to the **Absentee Action Plan**.
5. The College undertakes to inform students and their parents about attendance issues. The Homeroom Teacher and Year Level Coordinators may also decide to hold discussions with the student and their parents. On-going attendance issues or school refusal may be taken up by the Coordinator of Students (COS) or the Head of Campus (HOC).
6. The College requires parents to contact the college absentee line before 9.00am when their child is absent. A note and / or a doctor's medical certificate is to be presented by the student on return to school. Senior students must meet the attendance requirements of the Senior Programs guidelines.
7. If a student is, or is to be, absent for more than two days, parents are requested to notify the relevant Year Level Coordinator.
8. On their return to school, it is the responsibility of the student to approach subject teachers regarding work missed due to absence.
9. Medical or Dental Appointments should be made after school hours.
10. Notes from parents, appointment notices, doctor's medical certificates etc will be kept as records of non-school approved absences.
11. Appointments with the Senior Programs Coordinator/VCAL Coordinators, Careers Advisor or Student Services should be made during lunchtimes, before or after school.

## Unsatisfactory Completion Of A Unit Due To Absence

Years 7 to 10

In any one semester a student who has attended less than 80% in one subject due to non-school approved absence will be deemed not to have met the minimum attendance requirements for the course. Refer to the Catholic Education Reporting Guidelines with regards to reporting prolonged absences

VCE Students

In any one semester a student who has attended less than 80% in one subject due to non-school related absence will be deemed not to have met the minimum attendance requirements for the course and will receive an 'N' for that unit.

Parents will be contacted by mail to notify them this action.

**Students should not make other commitments during their scheduled study periods, as they may be required at school during these times.**

### Special Provision

- The rules of attendance may be waived in special cases determined by the College.
- Absence from school or study for prolonged periods is not of itself grounds for special consideration, unless a student has experienced severe hardship, which may have resulted in the prolonged absence from school. In such a case, the student will receive appropriate assistance and consideration.

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Policy Reviewed July 2017

Approved by Board

Renewal August 2021



# Absenteeism Action Plan

## Objectives

- To empower teaching staff to improve the attendance of students in their care
- To help parents understand the importance of regular attendance
- To encourage students to want to attend school
- To ensure that processes are streamlined and operate smoothly for the benefit of all
- Target attendance at 95%

No of days absent per term	Home room teacher's role	Year Level Co-ordinator's role	Other person's role
At 4 days absent	HRT to counsel student and identify the emergence of any issue. HRT to send letter identifying student as having had 4 days absent.	Monitor & liaise with HRT	Campus Office staff to SMS parents of students listed as unknown absence for each of these absences
At 6 days absent	Homeroom teacher to phone parent and speak about the emerging issue of absenteeism and its effect on his/her learning Send home an extreme absentee brochure	Year Level Coordinators to be informed and then to speak with student	YLC - Check to see if the emerging trend is an on-going one from last year
At 10 days absent	Homeroom teacher to inform YLC & COS. Year 7 & 8 Homeroom teacher to inform HOC.	YLCs bring issue to W & S meetings. COS to meet parents	Parents informed that the number of days absent from school will be affecting the student's grades
At 15 days absent	Homeroom teacher to inform COS and HOC. Year 7 & 8 Homeroom teacher to inform HOC	HOC meets with the student and parents	
At 20 days	List as chronic and enlist professional support HRT informs YLC, COS and HOC	COS/HOC refers the student to Student Services	Student Services counsels student & contacts parent to offer support and guidance
At P/T Interviews	HRT meets with parent and student to discuss the emerging issue and encourage attendance		