ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Victory Christian College is committed to promoting and maintaining high levels of student attendance in collaboration with students, parents and carers. Consistent attendance is essential for student learning, wellbeing, and long-term success.

The College recognises the importance of a strong partnership with families in supporting students to attend school regularly and punctually. Through this shared responsibility, the College aims to foster a culture where attendance is prioritised and every student is encouraged to engage fully in their educational journey.

AIMS

- To encourage and set high expectations for student attendance and punctuality.
- To minimise unexplained absences through clear procedures.
- To outline the College's legal responsibilities under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic).
- To promote collaborative practices with families that support consistent attendance and shared accountability for student engagement.

PRINCIPLES

- Victory Christian College fulfils its legal and regulatory obligations by monitoring attendance, maintaining accurate records, and reporting data to parents and relevant authorities.
- The College, in discharging its duty of care, is committed to ensuring unexplained absence is communicated promptly and followed up with students and parents.
- The College places a high priority on student attendance in the belief that attendance is essential for learning.
- The College discourages all student absences, except for medical reasons. Research has shown that students who miss more than 10% of the school year due to absence or lateness will likely have difficulty keeping up and achieving their best.

IMPLEMENTATION

Attendance Officers are appointed from Administration staff and are responsible for monitoring attendance and maintaining accurate attendance records in conjunction with teaching staff.

Arrivals and Departures

- Classes for all students begin promptly at 8:50am, Monday to Friday unless otherwise advertised in the College newsletter or Compass. This is when attendance is first taken for the day.
- All students arriving after 8:50am must report to Reception and have their arrival recorded
- Students leaving early must be signed out by the adult collecting them at Reception. If returning, they must also be signed back in by the accompanying adult. If the student is unaccompanied by their parent/guardian, the absence will be recorded as unexplained. Parents are responsible for updating the Compass portal or notifying Attendance via email to ensure the absence is appropriately managed.
- Early dismissal from any class is not permitted unless parent permission is given.

College Responsibilities

- Attendance rolls are important legal documents and, must be kept up to date. Class teachers are required to record all rolls accurately, as part of the College's responsibility to maintain correct records.
- Rolls are maintained through Compass. Rolls are taken a minimum of twice a day for Prep to Year Six, and at the beginning of each period for Year Seven to Twelve. Students must be marked present or not present
- Reminder emails will be sent to staff who have not submitted their rolls on time.
- All enrolled students are required to have their attendance recorded, even if they only attend the College premises part time.
- Attendance must be taken on excursions and camps, with regular head checks completed according to the risk assessment for each event.

- From time to time, students participate in other school activities that are not timetabled classes or excursions/camps. These activities will be recorded on Compass by the supervising staff, and will contribute to the accurate collection of attendance data.
- In the event of an emergency, attendance will be taken again to establish the safety status of all children.

Absences

- The College will notify parents of unexplained student absences each day via text message.
- A formal summary of student attendance is provided to parents in the mid-year and end of year reports. Parents can view day-to-day attendance for each of their children via Compass.
- Absence notes or emails received by homeroom teachers should be forwarded to the Attendance email.
- Homeroom Teachers are required to monitor absences and late arrivals, and contact parents if concerns arise.
- Where a student has poor attendance and possible disengagement from school, they will be referred to the College Wellbeing Team or Student Support Coordinator for assistance. College staff will then involve the parents and the student as appropriate in developing strategies to improve attendance.
- The College may refer families to the Navigator Program. Navigator works collaboratively with schools and families to address barriers to attendance and support sustained re-engagement.
- Where no reasonable excuse for extended or frequent absences is given, the matter may be escalated to the Department of Education and Training School Attendance Officer. Parents may be issued with a School Attendance Notice and subsequent further action such as the issue of an Infringement Notice or legal action.

Parent Responsibilities

- Parents must notify the College of student absences by:
    - adding an Attendance Note to Compass (via the Compass Education app or Compass website)
    - emailing attendance@vcc.vic.edu.au
    - telephoning the College Absence Line (5445 2601) or
    - sending a written note addressed to the relevant teacher
- It is a legal requirement that the College receive an explanation from parents for all student absences. The Compass App allows parents to select one of the following options:
    - Medical/Illness
    - Medical Appointment
    - Refusal
    - Bereavement
    - Truancy
    - Parent Choice
    - Family Holiday
    - Sorry Business

  If none of the above reasons apply, parents are advised to contact Reception.
- Parents should notify the College and explain the child's absence as early as possible, and no later than the morning of the absence.
- In the case of a late arrival or early departure, parents must ensure their child reports to Reception.
- To support each child's learning and wellbeing, parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with the College when a child has an ongoing medical condition that may lead to repeated absences or regular medical appointments during school hours.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their contact details are up to date on the College's records. This can be done by logging into Compass and going to the 'Update My Details' section.
- It is requested that families do not organise holidays or out of school appointments during the major assessment periods in Terms Two and Four.

Senior School Students

- VCE students are required to meet minimum attendance requirements as stated by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
- If a Year Nine to Twelve student is absent on the date a SAC is due, the College requires a medical certificate to explain the student's absence.
- VCE students who have authorised home study time are required to sign out at Reception.
- If VCE students are on site at the College during the exam period (after formal classes have ceased), they must sign in and out at Reception.

RELEVANT RESOURCES AND LEGISLATION

- Administrative Handbook, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
- Attendance Guidelines, Victorian Department of Education and Training's (Vic DET)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Navigator Program, Anglicare Victoria
- School TV
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Supervision Policy
- VCE Policies

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

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