



VICTORIA POINT STATE HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

SAFE, RESPECTFUL & DISCIPLINED SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT



The Code of
**School
Behaviour**

Better Behaviour
Better Learning

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RATIONALE

At Victoria Point State High School students are required to attend school on every day that it is open, unless otherwise advised. Student absence adversely affects the educational engagement and achievement for students. The school must account for every absence of every student and record the attendance data using DayMap. All students who are absent from school must provide a letter, note, email, reply SMS, or a phone call from their parent or carer, explaining the reason for the absence.

The information which follows is designed to clarify aspects of attendance including:

- Reasons for student absence.
 - Acceptable reasons
 - Unacceptable reasons
 - Lateness to school
 - Lateness to class
- Parent and carer responsibilities.
- Student responsibilities
- School responsibilities
- Related links

REASON FOR STUDENT ABSENCE

The school is responsible for monitoring student absence and accountable for establishing and recording the reason for student absence. This information is recorded in the school's *Daymap* system and Education Queensland's OneSchool system.

Acceptable reasons for student absences include:

- Sickness
- Danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease
- Temporary or permanent infirmity
- Unavoidable and sufficient cause e.g. bereavement within the family or of a close friend; or family trauma
- Attending a school organised activity that is not a timetabled event, e.g. excursion, camp, work experience, sporting event, cultural event
- Late to school due to traffic or mishap on the way to school
- Late to class with a late to class note

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence are:

- Truancy
- Leisure activities, such as shopping expeditions with or without carer
- Family arrangements, such as helping at home or at parent/carer's place of work
- Part-time or casual work, including travel to and from such work
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours, including driving lessons/tests, interviews
- Late to school due to sleeping in or not managing your journey time
- Late to class due to playing sport after the bell or waiting until the second bell to go to the bathroom

UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT ABSENCES

Where a whole day absence is proposed, or has occurred, and the reason is not acceptable, the following will occur:

Short term absences – daily absences

Students have a timetabled Family Group class each school morning where attendance is officially recorded. Text messages are sent to parent/carers' mobile phones by 11am if a student is recorded as an *Unexplained Absence during Family Group*, i.e. the parent/carer has not previously advised the school of the reason for the student's absence or the student is not in their timetabled class for Family Group.

Long term absences - 3 or more unexplained days

The Year Level Tracking Team and the Attendance Officer will review each year level's attendance records. Parents/carers of any student who has an unexplained absence from school for 3 or more days, will be contacted by the Attendance Officer using Daymap. Parents/carers will be asked to provide a reason for their child/s unexplained absence. This contact with the parent/carer will be recorded in OneSchool and Daymap.

Where a pattern of regular or chronic absenteeism (<80%) is identified by the Year Level Tracking Team and the Attendance Officer, the Year Level Tracking Team will refer to either the Year Level Lead Teacher, Guidance Officer or the Year Level Deputy Principal to contact the parent. The goal in this case is to identify the barrier to the student's regular attendance, and in partnership with the parent/carer, to develop a plan to support the students' improved attendance.

Where chronic absenteeism is referred to the relevant Deputy Principal by the Year Level Tracking Team:

- For students under the age of sixteen (under 16) and governed by Compulsory Schooling - unexplained absence from school for 15 or more consecutive days and contact is unable to be made with Parents/carers, the student's enrolment will be marked *Inactive*. The student may apply for re-enrolment at the school under the established enrolment process.
- For students under the age of sixteen (Under 16) with ongoing chronic absenteeism – *Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Provisions: Process for Persistent Truancy or Absenteeism for Children of Compulsory School Age*, as per the Queensland Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 may be commenced.
- For students over the age of sixteen (over 16) and Compulsory Schooling, the Year Level Deputy Principal will issue individual students the first letter in the process of Cancellation of Enrolment. Failure to attend a school meeting and continual whole day unexplained absences may result in a second letter in the Cancellation of Enrolment process. Failure to again attend the school meeting within five (5) days will result in the individual student's enrolment being cancelled.

Under these above provisions parents/carers failing to follow recommendations and the student's attendance fails to improve as stated on each letter may result in higher authorities being alerted, such as the Director General of Education who will be asked to consent to prosecution.

However, where a parent/carer has reported school avoidance or school refusal, the individual student will be referred to the Year Level Tracking Team and then followed up with by the relevant support staff.

UNACCEPTABLE REASON FOR LATENESS TO SCHOOL

Where there is an identified pattern of being late to school without an acceptable reason, late students (more than two times per term) the student will be referred to the Year Level Tracking Team and then followed up with by the relevant support staff.

UNACCEPTABLE REASON FOR LATENESS TO CLASS

Students arriving late to class, without appropriate permission, are to be managed at an appropriate time during the lesson so as to minimize disruption to the teaching/learning process, marked on Daymap late to class 'L' along with the time of arrival. The student is issued with an automatic detention.

Students who repeatedly arrive late to class will be identified by the Year Level Lead Teacher, and brought to the attention of the Year Level Tracking Team. The student will then be followed up by the relevant support staff.

PARENT AND CARER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the parents/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child/children, of any age, attend school every day unless there are acceptable reasons for their absence. For students under the age of sixteen (under 16) *Compulsory Schooling* is a legal requirement. For students over the age of sixteen (over 16) *Compulsory Participation* is a legal requirement for Youth Allowance, Abstudy, etc.

Left Student

It is the parents/carer's responsibility to ensure that the school is notified of changed circumstances that impact on the enrolment of their child/children, of any age. Parents/carers are requested to provide an exit date and reason to enact the cessation of a student's enrolment, destination school or employer. This information will be recorded as a contact in the student's OneSchool profile and their enrolment status will be changed to left.

Student absences – daily absences and long-term absences (3 or more consecutive school days)

Parents/carers are asked to:

- contact the school Attendance Line - 3820 5878, or
- email student.absence@vps.shs.eq.edu.au on the day of the absence, or
- to provide a written note - to be presented at Student Services on the day of return to school detailing the reason for the student's absence/s.

A medical certificate or appointment card for specialists must be provided in order for the absence to not have an impact on the student's approved attendance rate.

No academic exemptions or assessment extensions will be approved without a medical certificate and submission of completed AARA.

Long-term absences – parent requests

Occasionally requests are made by parent/carers for students to be absent for long periods, e.g. to accompany parent/carers on an overseas trip, bereavement / sorry business. Parent/carers are asked to discuss with the child/children's Year Level Deputy Principal the implications of long-term absences from the school, before plans are confirmed. Final approval for any long period of student absence needs to be sought from the Principal in the form of an Approved Form Exemption from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation.

Lateness and Early Departure

It is the parents/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child/children, are in attendance as per the school's scheduled hours of operation – unless there are acceptable reasons for their absence. At Victoria Point State High School, the school hours for attendance are Monday to Friday - 8.45am to 2.45pm - for all year levels, unless a flexible learning agreement is approved for individual students or the student's timetable advises otherwise e.g. off campus.

Please refer to legislation governing schooling in Queensland, the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, Chapter 9: Part 1 - Division 1 - Section 176 which explains the parents' obligations for compulsory school attendance.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Returning to School After Absence or Late Arrival

Students who have been absent from school or arrive late are required to report to Student Reception at Administration on the first day of their return to school with a letter or note from their parent/guardian, if the parent/Carer has not previously contacted the school regarding the reason for the student's absence.

The student may also have to present a doctor's certificate with completed AARA, if academic exemptions or assessment extensions are being requested.

A medical certificate or appointment card for specialists may be provided in order for the absence to not have an impact on the student's approved attendance rate.

For late to school - the Attendance Officer will issue the student with a *Late Slip*.

The student is to immediately report to the relevant subject on their timetable. Before entering the classroom, the student is to present their Late Slip to the class teacher. This is to be done with minimal disruption to the classroom learning environment.

Leaving the School Prior to 2.45pm

Students who are to leave school before the scheduled school finish time of 2.45pm are to report to Student Reception at Administration immediately on their arrival at school with a letter or note - if the parent/carers has not previously contacted the school regarding the reason for the student's early departure. The Attendance Officer will record in Daymap the requested time and reason for early departure, and issue the student with a Leave Request.

The student is to present the Leave Request to the class teacher at the beginning of the scheduled subject from which they are to make an early departure. The student is then to exit the class at the time indicated on the Leave Request, with minimal disruption to the classroom learning environment, and report immediately to Student Reception at Administration to sign out and be issued with a Leave Pass. The student must then promptly exit the school grounds.

Students who are placed on Part-Time Education Plans, enrolled in TAFE or are scheduled to leave school prior to 2.45pm on their timetables, are required to attend Student Reception at Administration and sign out of the school. The Attendance Officer will issue the student with a Leave Pass.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES – MONITORING STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

It is the responsibility of the school to monitor student absence from school or class.

The Attendance Officer

Daily

- Export previous days attendance from Daymap to OneSchool. Fix any bulk conflicts.
- Import from OneSchool to Daymap
- Process absence advice from parents (phone calls, SMS , email). Refresh repeatedly throughout day.
- Process excursions/sporting events etc.
- Process late arrivals and early departure requests.
- Process any paper rolls, including leader rolls (9L, 11P and 12L).
- 11am – send out absence and late arrival SMS. Check 'unmarked rolls' before sending.
- Process absence notes and medical certificates.
- Distribute list of unmarked rolls to staff (prior to 11am, 1:30pm and 2:45pm)
- Update variations to timetables (TAFE, SBT etc.).
- Record student participation (e.g. wellbeing programs, time out).
- 3-day consecutive absences or explained consecutive absences - emailed to all staff.
- Issue detentions for late to school, uniform – when students arrive late
- Unmarked rolls by end of the day – email teacher and HoD -
- 3rd time unmarked rolls at the end of the day – refer to DP -
- All Unexplained absences
- SMS to advise parent and seek reason for absence
- Run weekly report, call parent, OS contact
- 3-day unexplained SMS sent & call parent (Daily SMS will also be sent) - YLLT – referral to Tracking Meeting for the Yr. Level -
- Advise YLLT if unexplained absence continues (4,5 7 so days)
- Less than 85% attendance – referral to YLLT – YLLT to take to Tracking Meeting
- Run truancy report 2.45pm daily – SMS to parent – Your student has been entered onto Daymap as truant from one or more classes today. Please advise your student they are to attend a detention in the Early Intervention Centre tomorrow at AM Break.
- Run anomaly Report – if there is anomaly e.g. Present all day and then unexplained – investigate the issue

Weekly

- Generate a weekly Unexplained Absence Report – YLLT & DP
- Generate attendance scoreboard (Excel template) and distribute to DPs, HOD Engagement and YLLT.

Termly

- Process requests for Abstudy attendance confirmation.
- Archive rolls and absence notes (boxed and labelled – to be kept for 5 years).
- Send out SMS to parents to advise;
- Reports being emailed home
- Parent/Teacher interviews
- Unexplained absences reminder

Yearly

- Day 8 reconciliation (refer to How To guide).
- Process attendance for final 8 days of Term 4 when on new timetable ('School Activity').

The Family Group Teacher

Student attendance is recorded during Family Group class at the beginning of each day and throughout the day by teachers of timetabled classes. All student attendance data is recorded in *Daymap*.

The Year Level Tracking Team

The Year Level Tracking Team (Year Level Deputy Principal, Guidance Officer, Year Level Lead Teacher, Inclusive Education Teachers) monitor student patterns of attendance and contact parents/carers where concern may arise with a student's attendance and engagement in their studies. Where a pattern of regular or chronic absenteeism is identified by the Year Level Tracking Team and the Attendance Officer, the relevant Year Level Deputy Principal will be advised. The school may also begin the Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Provision process as per the Queensland Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

RELATED LINKS

University of Queensland Research Report – Making Every Day Count: Effective strategies to improve student attendance in Queensland state schools (June 2017)

Every Day Counts – Is your child at school today?

<https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/initiatives/every-day-counts>

Queensland Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Reprint current from 1 January 2018

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-039>

Queensland Child Employment Act 2006, Reprint current from 1 March 2017 to date

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-002>

Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Managing-Student-Absences-and-Enforcing-Enrolment-and-Attendance-at-State-Schools.aspx>

Education Queensland, What is meant by “compulsory schooling”.

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/pages/search.aspx?k=compulsory%20participation>

Education Queensland, What is meant by the “Compulsory Participation Phase”.

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/pages/search.aspx?k=compulsory%20participation>

Education Queensland, Application for Exemption from Compulsory Schooling for up to 1 school year (state school),

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/pages/search.aspx?k=exemption>

Education Queensland, Flexible Arrangement for School Students,

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/pages/search.aspx?k=flexible%20arrangement>

VPSHS Assessment Policy – refer to school website –

www.vps.shs.eq.edu.au

