

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Kilbreda College

A Kildare Education Ministries School in the Brigidine Tradition



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1. Values

Kilbreda College as part of Kildare Ministries is inspired by the transformative visions of the Christian story and our rich traditions. Our vision is a community where all people are valued, where all creation is recognised as sacred and where hope, justice and courage are our hallmarks.

2. Introduction

In accordance with the [Education Training and Reform Act 2006 \(Vic.\)](#) (the Act) and the [Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 \(Vic.\)](#), school attendance is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted (refer to **Appendix 1: Guidelines** for absence and [Exemption from School Attendance or Enrolment](#), Department of Education and Training (DET), 2021).

Whilst ensuring student attendance at school is a legal obligation of parents/carers, supporting students to attend school each day is the shared responsibility of all parents, students, the school and the wider community.

School attendance is important as it maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. Positive engagement with schooling enhances academic and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people ([eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)). Attending school every day for the whole day enables students to participate in the school's educational program as well as develop their social skills.

Regular attendance enables the school to:

- Plan an organised educational program that is delivered in a consistent way and has continuity;
- Facilitate shared student learning experiences that support the educational program;
- Monitor student progress and adjust the educational program to meet student needs. All schools must maintain attendance records, identify and follow-up unexplained absences and develop procedures to support and maintain student attendance.

3. Rationale

The “Everyday Counts” report (Victorian Government, 2015) has concluded that “Going to school every day is the single most important part of [a] child’s education. Students learn new things in school every day – missing school puts them behind.” This policy articulates Kilbreda College’s response to that report.

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 4, cl 10) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.9) require that we must make provisions to:

- Monitor the daily attendance of each student enrolled at the College;
- Identify any absences of a student from the College including classes;
- Follow up any unexplained absences of a student from the College or classes;
- Notify any parent / carer regarding a student’s unsatisfactory class attendance;
- Record information regarding a student’s unsatisfactory attendance at Kilbreda College or classes on their student file.

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 4, cl 11) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.10) require that we must maintain a student attendance register in which the attendance at the College of any child of compulsory school age is noted at least twice on each school day, and any reason given or apparent for the absence of the child from the College is noted.

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4. Scope

The details and procedures contained in this policy are applicable to Kilbreda College and the students enrolled at Kilbreda College.

The purpose of this Attendance Policy is to:

- Reflect the intent of the Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic.) (the Act) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.);
- Guide the actions of all staff working with children and young people and their parents/carers on matters relating to school attendance and participation;
- Inform the development of associated guidelines and procedures for promoting, monitoring and reporting on attendance;
- Promote and support attendance at Kilbreda College;
- Reinforce parents/carers obligations to ensure all children and young people are enrolled and attend school on every day that instruction is provided for the child at Kilbreda College.

5. Definitions

Attendance: A student is considered to be in attendance at school when onsite and/or involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by Kilbreda College (for example an excursion or camp). A student is also considered to be in an attendance when the student is engaged in a re-engagement program or another school part time to make-up full time attendance and Kilbreda and the other educational setting have agreed the time fractions, allocation of Student Resource Package (or other funding) and the education plan for the student (see **Appendix 2: Guidelines for absence**).

Parent/Carer: Includes 'a carer and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the Family Law Act 1975 (Cwlth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.'

Unexplained or unapproved absences: The Principal can approve or not approve any absence, based on the requirements of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) or on a case-by-case basis.

The Act provides some examples of what a reasonable excuse is for the purposes of explaining a school absence and includes, amongst other considerations:

- Illnesses and accidents;
- Unforeseen and unexplained circumstances;
- If the absence was a result of complying with another law;
- The child is receiving distance education through a registered school;
- The child is undertaking approved education, training and/or employment;
- The child has been suspended or negotiated transfer/expelled;
- The child is attending or observing a religious event or obligation.

Unapproved Absence: In general, the Principal may record an absence as 'unapproved' when no reasonable explanation has been given for the student's absence. If a reason given for a student's absence and is not approved by the Principal then Kilbreda College will notify the parent or legal carer in writing.

Exemption: The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) allows exemptions from school attendance and enrolment to be granted in certain circumstances, where the student:

- Will be participating in approved education or training, or employment, or both, on a full-time basis;
- Is employed or seeking employment during school hours in the entertainment industry;

An exemption from school attendance and enrolment may also be granted where leaving school is in the best interests of the student.

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All applications for exemptions are considered on a case by case basis, with the student's best interests as the guiding principle for decision-making. In making a decision, the potential benefits or negative consequences of granting the exemption to the student's educational progress, wellbeing and development are also considered. **A student must continue attending school until an exemption is granted.**

Note: No exemption is required if a student is not of compulsory school age (6 to 17 years of age).

Exemptions, including written approval for student attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduced to less than full time, can only be authorised by the Assistant Principal: Wellbeing and Engagement in conjunction with the Principal.

Refer to the Department of Education and Training (DET) [Exemption from school attendance and enrolment](#) guidance for further information.

6. Guiding Principles

Regular student attendance is critical to success in learning, wellbeing and overall school engagement. Kilbreda College's processes and procedures in relation to attendance recording and reporting requirements will comply with mandated regulations, whilst ensuring a pastoral intent in supporting students with attendance concerns.

7. Principles and Procedures

Responsibilities for school attendance

Parent/Carer

Parents/carers must ensure their child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction, unless exemption from attendance has been granted. For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/carers must promptly provide an explanation on each occasion to Kilbreda College.

Students

Students are expected to attend Kilbreda College during normal school hours every day of term, unless there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student, or the student is registered for home schooling and has partial enrolment.

Kilbreda College

Kilbreda College will ensure that:

- Daily attendance of each student enrolled at the College is recorded for every class within the first 10 minutes;
- Any absences of a student from school, included classes, are identified;
- Reasons for each student's absence are provided and recorded in writing;
- Explanations for absences that are provided, are a reasonable excuse for the purposes of their responsibilities under the Act;
- Any unexplained absences of a student are followed up by contacting the parent/carers of the student as soon as practicable on the same day.
- Parents/carers are notified promptly regarding a student's unsatisfactory school or class attendance. If, upon being notified of their child's absence or contacted to seek an explanation, a parent reports that the child was not living with them on the day, the school should ensure they notify another parent who was responsible for ensuring the child attended school on the relevant day(s);
- If contact cannot be made with the parent/carers, contact will be made with the emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school;
- Information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes is recorded on their student file.
- Parents/carers are informed of their responsibilities around attendance and initiatives aimed at promoting parental awareness of the importance of children attending school every day are implemented;

Kilbreda College must ensure cont...

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- Attendance improvement strategies, interventions and levels of adjustment are implemented where the absence is having a significant impact on a student's educational achievement and development, including an Attendance Student Support Group and Return to School Plan;
- Strategies for supporting attendance of students in out-of-home care, experiencing homelessness, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) families, overseas students, students with disabilities, students with cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and newly arrived families are implemented;
- MACS is advised prior to a referral to a DET School Attendance Officer when a student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months without a reasonable excuse for absence;
 - Refer to the 'Everyday Counts' flowchart on the [CEVN webpage](#)
- Referral processes are implemented to Child FIRST or Child Protection, MACS and the School Attendance Officer where required;
 - Refer to [Child Protection and Child Safe Standards \(PROTECT\)](#)

8. Related Policies, Legislation and Documents

References

- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2021. [School attendance guidelines](#)
- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2020. [Exemption from School Attendance or Enrolment](#)
- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2020. [Seven attendance improvement strategies](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic.\)](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 \(Vic.\)](#)

Resources

- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2021. Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: [Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#).
- CEVN ['Everyday Counts'](#)

Related Policies

- [Student Enrolment Policy](#)
- [Student Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [Student Duty of Care Policy](#)

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Appendix 1: Procedures for monitoring school attendance

1. Notification of an absence can be made by parent/carer via PAM or by contacting the School Attendance Officer via the Kilbreda Attendance Line: 9581 7770.
2. Parents, carers and/or carers are required to notify the College by 8.30am of the reason for any absence from school on the day of absence.
3. Where the reason for absence is known, the reason is recorded by the School Attendance Officer on SIMON and the teachers are notified of the absence and reason for this.
4. Attendance at the school is checked each lesson and recorded on SIMON.
5. The attendance reports are accessed by School Attendance Officer to follow up students who are absent without explanation.
6. If a student is absent without explanation, the school attendance officer will contact the parent/carer for an explanation on the day of absence.
7. Information about the number of days of absence are recorded on student files and on student reports by School Attendance Officer/Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching.
8. Where the rate of absenteeism is of concern, the Year Level Leader/Student Wellbeing Team leader will follow up with the parent/carer of the level of support required.
9. Parents are required to provide up-to-date contact details and notify the school of any changes to contact details or address.

Appendix 2: Procedure for late arrival at school

1. Notification of an absence can be made by parent/carer via PAM or by contacting the School Attendance Officer via the Kilbreda Attendance Line: 9581 7770
2. Students who arrive late to school must bring a note from home explaining why they are late and must report to the General Office to receive a late pass which will record the time of arrival.
3. This late pass must be given to the classroom teacher.
4. Students who are late to school on 3 occasions without notification from a parent/carer will be issued with a detention. These are held every Thursday from 3.20pm – 4.20pm in Room 15. Students are permitted to bring school work to do during this time.

Key Reference

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